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THE MEMOIRS OF Miſs D'Arville; OR THE Italian Female Philoſopher: IN A SERIES OF ADVENTURES FOUNDED ON FACT.

Tranſlated from the ITALIAN, by CARLI BRESCIANO, Secretary to his Serene Highneſs the Duke of Modena.

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John Nicholas

THE
MEMOIRS
OF
Mrs D'Arville;
A TALE.
In which Female Characters are
INTERESTED.

Tr.R.
A795M

THE MEMOIRS OF Miſs *D'Arville.*

INTRODUCTION.

IN writing this hiſtory of my life, I ſeek not, as many of my ſex do, for that immortal glory which is to be acquired by virtue of the preſs; if I aim at any advantage from theſe my labours, it is principally that of inſtructing my little daughter, who at preſent is not at the age of maturity, but by theſe memoirs, I hope, will learn how to act with diſcretion when ſhe arrives to it; and if my deſign ſhould be attended with ſucceſs, I ſhall think myſelf amply recompenſed, and that my time has not been ſpent in vain. But, let that be as

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it will, perhaps they may not prove unſerviceable to others, whoſe curioſity may induce them to peruſe this work for their entertainment: I have no occaſion to adopt the romantic Adventures of others, my own life being one uninterrupted ſeries of extraordinary events, which, if they had not really happened to myſelf, would appear, even to me, almoſt incredible. Every one whoſe character makes a part in theſe memoirs, can teſtify whether I ſpeak truth; though I have omitted mentioning their names for many reaſons of honour and friendſhip, yet, upon peruſal, they will ſoon know whom I am, and acknowledge me to be ſincere. When a woman writes that which procures her but little honour, it may juſtly be ſaid, that over ſelf-love and vanity, love of truth prevails; and, where that is the caſe, even her defects merit ſome allowance.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

My Education in the Convent of Avignon.

IN what manner it pleaſed providence to diſpoſe of me till I arrived at the age of ten years, the reader will, in the courſe of this hiſtory, be hereafter more particularly informed: ſuffice it at preſent to ſay, that at that age, I found myſelf placed to be educated with ſeveral young ladies in a convent at Avignon. I was provided with every thing neceſſary to render life agreeable, and lived ſo much to my ſatisfaction that, although I was ignorant from whence I derived my ſupport, I had hitherto given myſelf no trouble to diſcover my unknown benefactor. My thoughts were confined to preſent objects, and my diſcourſe on ſuch ſubjects alone as were naturally beſt adapted to my youthful and artleſs capacity. Such was my ſtate till the ſecret movements of my heart convinced me that what I enjoyed, in being ſo well provided for and educated, muſt neceſſarily lay me under an obligation to ſome one; and the conſequence of that reflection made me deſire to know the perſon to whom I was in duty bound to be grateful for the ſame.

This dictate of nature encreaſed in me every year; and though ſometimes diverted from ſerious reflection by childiſh amuſements, I began to conſider maturely on the nature of my condition. The other young ladies were frequently viſited by their near relations and perſons of quality; for my part, I ſaw nobody: nevertheleſs my growing vanity flattered me that I was not inferior to the nobleſt of them in point of birth. I was often in ſuſpenſe how I was born, and what in time might be my condition: my ſpirits were oppreſſed with a variety of new ideas, and to my former uninterrupted tranquility ſucceeded the moſt tormenting inquietude.

Not knowing who were my relations, and having neither friends or parents upon whom by nature I could depend, the thoughts of what was to become of me hereafter gave me great uneaſineſs. The governeſs, a woman of ſenſe and experience, was no ſtranger to thoſe tumults in my mind; ſhe gueſſed the motive, but, without deſiring to know it from me, prudently endeavoured to divert me from my trouble by her extraordinary tenderneſs; her noble heart ſtrove with her ſpirit, and her obliging manners were truly worthy of both; and

and not a day paſſed in which I did not receive ſome ſignal token of her affection. One day in particular ſhe let ſlip ſome words, in preſence of the other young ladies, relative to my family; and paſſed ſome encomiums upon its magnificence and diſtinction. Being not at that time in one of my thoughtful diſpoſitions, I took but little notice of what ſhe ſaid; though I muſt confeſs it was very agreeable to my vanity, and when I reflected on it afterwards, my curioſity greatly augmented my content. The confuſed idea ſuggeſted to me by my governeſs of my lofty condition, perfectly correſponded with the grandeur and delicacy of my treatment. Confined as I was to ſolitude, I neither wanted jewels, cloaths, or money to render me a diſtinguiſhed figure in life, and qualify me for the moſt polite aſſemblies. Nature, who beſtowed on me a fine harmonious voice, gave me alſo a genius for muſic, in which I was inſtructed, during the ſpace of three years, by the moſt able profeſſor in Avignon, by whoſe leſſons I arrived to a great perfection in ſinging, and became a compleat miſtreſs of the violin and harpſichord.

Theſe delightful applications diverted my fancy, and leſſen'd my diſquiet. My ruling paſſion was the ſtudy of letters. In my tender years I had been taught the German, the Engliſh, and Italian; and each of theſe, beſides the French, were to me natural, and had not a little contributed to enrich my mind with knowledge ſuperior to my ſex. An innumerable variety of ſtories, poetry, romances, and voyages, which I read with inexpreſſible pleaſure, gave me daily ſome new and magnificent idea of this great world that I had not yet ſeen, and for which I ſeemed to be born. I delighted greatly in reading, which diſturbed me much as often as I reflected upon what I had read, not knowing what figure I ſhould make in the great theatre, and whether, from the uncertainty of my ſituation, I ought to number myſelf among the happy or unfortunate.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Uncertainty of my Relations.

IN this perplexity of mind I continued, and arrived inſenſibly at the age of ſixteen, at which time my perſon and ſtature was little different from the preſent, though in age more than double that number, and by the many viciſſitudes of fortune a little altered. If any one ſhould want my picture, I can eaſily give it them with that original ſimplicity which a looking-glaſs now ſuggeſts to me, oppoſite which I caſually find myſelf while I am writing theſe memoirs.

My ſtature exceeded a little the middling, rather delicate and thin, but proportionate in every part. My ſkin not the very whiteſt, but of an agreeable tincture, the air of my face having nothing languid and effeminate, though rather lovely. Black eyes, large and ſprightly; black hair and eyebrows; a ſmall mouth, a profile noſe, with lips more than midlingly red. As to my temper, it is altogether furious and phlegmatic: to give more than ordinary joy it required a great deal, and very little to make me ſad; as ready to be

be angry as pleaſed, being like a fire of ſtraw that is ſoon extinguiſhed, but in its firſt impreſſions capable of blowing up ever ſo great a flame. All the falſe ſteps of my life were the reſult of my natural impetuous fiery temper. All the fatal conſequences that afterwards happened, derived their ſource, as I may ſay, from my philoſophical phlegm, to which every misfortune ſeems leſs hard than the ſhame to recede from a falſe ſtep, and ſhew ones ſelf vile not to be entirely unhappy. Thus I am at preſent, and ſuch I was in the eighteenth year of my age, when freſh troubles gave me new motives to know myſelf better. A letter that my governeſs gave me one day alarmed me beyond expreſſion. Giving it me in the preſence of ſeveral of my companions, "Take this, madam, ſaid ſhe, it is a letter from your mother; when you have read it anſwer it as you ought, and pleaſe to deliver your anſwer into my hand." I took the letter with that eager impatience which extreme deſire ſuggeſted to me, to know who were my relations. I opened it with heart-felt ſentiments of affectionate reſpect which till then I was a ſtranger to. But, oh! how I remained when I ſaw it had neither

ther ſubſcription nor date; my firſt joy changed ſuddenly into horrible confuſion; this confuſion paſſed from my ſpirits to my heart, and diffuſed itſelf through all my nerves. I trembled from head to foot: I ſweat, and was like ice in the ſame moment. The ſuperſcription of the letter was as follows: "To Madam D'Arvile, in the Retirement of Avignon, in Province;" and the letter run thus:

"Dear Daughter,

The circumſtances, unknown to you, that oblige me leave you where you are, ſerve only to encreaſe in me the deſire of ſeeing you. Time does not permit it me at preſent; ſtudy therefore to cultivate thoſe noble talents nature has given you, and render your age more worthy of my deſires. The tenderneſs of a mother makes me deſire a line in anſwer to this; you will not deny it me. I ſhall not omit any thing that can contribute to your education. Don't let vain curioſity torment you to know me. Wait patiently for the day; nor can I tell you how far it is off. With this you'll receive one hundred piſtoles to diſpoſe of as you pleaſe. Love me; and I am tenderly

Your affectionate Mother."

I read over and over this letter with incredible ſurprize. To wonder ſucceeded agitation of heart; and this was ſo violent that I had not ſtrength to ſtand upright, but fell upon the bed without uttering a word, and, with eyes ſwelling with tears and turning here and there ſeeking who would clear up my doubts, I took the letter again in my hand and then threw it upon the bed, as though I was inſenſible of my grief. I called reaſon to my aſſiſtance for motives to calm my ſpirits, but all in vain; and every thought, every conſideration, every object preſented a riddle full of darkneſs, of which I had not the leaſt comprehenſion. I had no other knowledge of the world but what I had acquired from books. Reading, had made me conceive a thouſand ideas poſſible to be adapted to my circumſtances, but every one of theſe might deceive me. After two hours profound reflection I knew nothing certain, only that I had a mother who did not refuſe letting me know that I was her child.

In this ſtate my governeſs ſurprized me, who came expreſly into my chamber to find me; and ſeeing me upon the bed, ſate down very lovingly upon the ſide of it, ſaying, Pray, Madam, what

what has occaſioned your uneaſineſs? is it the letter I gave you ſo unexpectedly? it ought to give you great conſolation. Madam, ſaid I, it would have given me great ſatisfaction had not my mother left her name in the pen. That does not ſignify, ſaid ſhe, I am certain of her tender regard for you, and theſe hundred piſtoles which I bring by her order may convince you if you have the leaſt doubt. So ſaying ſhe took from her pocket a green ſilk purſe with the hundred piſtoles. I received the purſe, and ſhe after a few tender expreſſions took her leave.

She had hardly got up from the bed to go, but I diſcovered a letter which ſhe accidentally drop out of her pocket at the time ſhe pulled out the purſe. I had ſome thoughts of calling her back to take it; but ſhe was already at the door, and my curioſity made me ſilent. Letting her go, I took the letter and found it wrote by the ſame hand with that from my mother. With impatience leaping from the bed I ſhut the door of my chamber, and with incredible palpitation of heart I opened it to read.

The firſt things that attracted my eyes, were to obſerve the ſubſcription

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and the date; but how was I ſurprized not finding one nor the other. I immediately confronted one with the other and the character ſeemed to me to be the ſame, but the ſtyle very different; in a word, ſhe deſired my governeſs to inſinuate, to me, that it was time I ſhould chuſe the life of a cloyſter, and in ſuch caſe that one thouſand piſtoles were ready for that purpoſe. I ſcarce believed myſelf, but read them again and compared them together. A ſuſpicion came into my head that the governeſs uſed ſome art in regard to me: her actions ſeemed artful and deſigning; I could not tell the reaſon but every thing ſeemed obſcure, and the leaſt ſhadow ſeemed to me a riddle that I did not underſtand the half of. With one arm reſting on my toilet, I was making ſome reflections on their contrarities, when the door (which was ſtill ſhut) opening with impetuoſity, there entered a young German girl that about five years had been my waiting-maid: her name was Celiſtina, and ſhe returned with an anſwer to ſome little affairs of no conſequence that I had ſent her about betimes in the morning. She was ſo well acquainted with my temper, and ſo attentive an obſerver of the leaſt commotion in me, that ſhe immediately

mediately perceived my agitation. She was going to ask me the cause; but, observing it, I thought it was best to shut her mouth by prevention. Celistina, said I, you find me in the greatest trouble. I observed it, said she; but what, in the name of wonder, can be the cause of so great an alteration? Ah! if you did but know, said I, dear Celistina, it is hardly ten minutes ago that hearing Madam Termes call me from the garden below, I opened the window to see what she wanted, and there flew out of the window the most beautiful bird I ever saw in my life: I don't know how it came into my room, nor do I know who brought it here; but I know very well that I would give any thing in the world it had not got away. If that is all, said Celistina, make yourself easy, that's a thing of little moment: know then— I will not know any thing, added I, that bird gives me more trouble than you can possibly imagine. She went away laughing, and I remained contented with my invention, which took off her curiosity of asking me a thousand questions why I was in such trouble, and prevented many suspicions that might come into the minds of my other companions, if

they ſhould ſee me altered more than ordinary. The thing ſucceeded, and no one aſked any more about it. All, it is true, in this houſe loved me; by a thouſand little obligations I had gained their eſteem, and I knew their affection. I alſo had my partialities, and in particular for thoſe who were moſt of my own temper. I had a pleaſure in doing good to all, but it alſo pleaſed me to have the ſame return. Nothing diſguſted me more than ingratitude, tho' there is nothing one encounters ſo frequently. Generoſity and politeneſs certainly prevailed moſt over my mind, which I did not know how to reſiſt; but diſſimulation and vanity were always the objects of my moſt implacable hatred. I ſhould have been glad to have found a candour of heart in every one able to ſtand any experiment; but experience of the world, in time, taught me that it was to be found but in very few, and it is very dangerous even in ourſelves. It may be ſaid, without offending any body, if there was more candour in ourſelves, we ſhould find leſs diſſimulation in others. Let this be as it will, the friend in whom I repoſed moſt confidence, was Madam Termes. As ſhe diſcloſed all her ſentiments to me, ſo I concealed nothing from her: a moſt incompa-

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rable modeſty was the rule of all her actions; always equal in her manners, which rendered her always lovely and dear in her converſation. Madam Rennes was another lady much of the ſame diſpoſition, for which reaſon we were generally together from morning till night. The firſt of theſe two ladies was ſubject to a defluction in the breaſt, which cauſed a thouſand fears and troubles. The phyſicians had adviſed her to guard againſt the open air upon the ſetting of the ſun; but this precaution gave her ſome pain, as it deprived her of thoſe evening walks which were her greateſt delight. One night that we were walking together in the garden, ſhe was ſurpriſed all of a ſudden with ſuch a violent coughing, that it was neceſſary to carry her to her chamber and put her to bed. I paſſed a very diſagreeable night on her account; but my affliction was much greater the day following. when called in great haſte to her bed I found her very nigh death. I gave way to ſuch exceſſive grief, at ſo melancholy a ſight, that it required more to make me calm than to diſpoſe my dear friend for death. Giving me a lovely and languid look, There is no need, ſaid ſhe, to afflict yourſelf ſo

much, becauſe, thank God, I don't yet find myſelf ſo bad as perhaps you think me. So ſaying ſhe gave me her hand, and it ſeemed as if ſhe had got freſh vigour, with deſire to comfort me. I burſt into tears, and fell down upon the bed. Oh! no, ſaid ſhe, don't cry, my dear, ſo piteouſly unleſs you have a mind to grieve me in theſe laſt moments of my life: this is the time to make good uſe of your reaſon: why ſo much love for a life of which we are not our own maſters? why ſo much horror for death which is the moſt inconteſtable thing we are born to inherit? Though death divides me from you, yet you may have me in your heart; and that I may live perpetually there, here is my picture; preſerve it always about you for an authentic proof of that friendſhip I carry inviolably to the ſepulchre, and when ever you look at it do me juſtice, by confeſſing that I always loved you moſt tenderly. She was talking, and I crying, when Count Termes, her brother, entered the room; ſeeing her in that ſtate he remained immoveable for ſome time before he could utter one word. Madam Termes was the firſt to alleviate his grief. Dear brother, ſaid ſhe, this your viſit would

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be an incredible satisfaction, if the pleasure was not diminished in so great a degree by your grief. The Count sate himself down opposite to me. The trouble he saw painted in my face served but to augment his fears. I rose up to go away, and leave them together; but he took me by the hand, and insisted upon my not leaving the room. You seem, my brother, said she, in a condition not to be able to say much; every moment I find myself draw nearer my end; though I am in the flower of my age, it gives me no great trouble: to a life like mine, accompanied with so much sickness, death may be considered as a relief. The Count, in a few words, admired in his sister her greatness of sentiments; but his grief getting the better of him, he got up, embraced her, and went away, promising that he would be with her the next morning. In taking his leave of the company he distinguished me in a particular manner, though my afflictions at that time prevented my taking much notice of it. Madam Termes in a few hours after died; I remained much troubled, and he did not return only to assist at her funeral.

CHAP. III.

My Diſlike to the Life of a Cloyſter.

SOME few days after Count Termes aſked for me below, and deſired to know what was become of his ſiſter's picture that was not to be found among her other little things. I replied, that it was in my poſſeſſion, and that his ſiſter herſelf had given it to me. This confeſſion I ſhould have been glad to have avoided, fearing he might make a demand of it; but in obliging words he aſſured me to the contrary. I am glad, ſaid he, that it is in your hands, as I know you will make the ſame account of it as if I myſelf had it; but becauſe you will honour the memory of my ſiſter by preſerving her picture, accept alſo of this ſnuff-box which was already deſigned for her. So ſaying he took the picture out of my hand and fixing it in the box, returned it to me very courteouſly, and took his leave without giving me time to thank him for it. Returning to my chamber I felt myſelf overcome with melancholy: the memory of my deceaſed friend, the uncertainty of my birth, my preſent ſituation, and a thouſand tormenting reflections

flections of futurity assailed me all at once. Desiring to be alone that I might indulge myself more freely in melancholy thoughts, I gave Celestina some orders that obliged her to go from me immediately. Without knowing what I did, I walked several times a-cross the room, and then sate down; I opened a book, and then shut it again; I opened the two letters from my mother that I might examine them again, but to no more purpose than before. I took out of my pocket the box with the picture of Madam Termes, almost ready to cry for the loss of her, but what was my surprize, when, on opening it, I found her brother's picture, instead of hers! Then, but too late, I perceived the error that I had committed by a blind tenderness towards my friend, in which I suffered myself to be deceived. A thousand thoughts all at once, of fear, of honesty, of shame, crowded in upon my mind. Between confusion and anger, I shut the box, never to open it again, resolving to let the Count know that I thought myself used ill if he did not return me his sister's picture and take back his own. I was at the point of sending it back to him with a letter, but that seemed to me to be rather unbecoming.

becoming. I determined however to wait an occaſion of ſeeing him. Between theſe troubleſome perplexities I was caught by Celeſtina, who accoſted me with a laugh; Oh! do you know, Madam, ſaid ſhe laughing, do you know Madam Roſe, ſhe that pretended to be your friend, and came ſo often to ſee you? ſhe, they ſay, ran away laſt night from her houſe with her lover. In this ſtyle ſhe gave me a full account of the ſtory. From this ſhe paſſed to deſcribe the train and equipage of a great perſonage of the kingdom that had paſſed by Avignon, going to Paris. By the force of chat ſhe diverted my thoughts ſo much that I paſſed the remainder of that day pretty eaſy, and I ſlept the next night leſs interrupted. By ſleeping I gathered a little more ſtrength, but I could not ſtifle the memory of my two letters. Thoſe two fatal letters came frequently into my mind: by little and little I found my blood chill with fear of being ſhut up in a nunnery. Heaven had by no means called me to that ſtate of life; the example of ſo many others, inſtead of eaſing me, ſerved only to frighten me the more. From thence I found I was under an indiſpenſable neceſſity for once

once to think for myſelf. The quiet hours of the night, the moſt remote part of the houſe, and the ſilence of this my ſolitude, invited me to call to my aſſiſtance my moſt mature thoughts, to determine what part I ought to take. If I thought of ſuch a life as this, it was uſing myſelf with violence: to my fiery and lively temper, the moſt extravagant reſolutions had no horror in them. After thinking a long time, I found myſelf ready to undertake any thing, and reſolved in my heart not to ſpend my life in a voluntary priſon. One day, in particular, I was walking alone in the moſt remote part of the garden, when Madam Rennes ſaluted me in the name of Count Termes, adding, that he had enquired with great concern about my health. I returned her thanks as I ought, and I was almoſt ready to charge her with the delivering him the picture; but the governeſs came ſuddenly upon us, and took me aſide, ſaying ſhe wanted to ſpeak with me.

My firſt ſuſpicion was that ſhe knew ſomething of the picture, and that ſhe was come to enquire of me about it. Knowing her to be a woman of great penetration, I was careful not to diſcover what paſſed in my mind; and concealed

ceal'd my ſentiments with ſo much art, that ſhe had not the leaſt ſuſpicion. She began by talking of Madam Rennes, exhorting me not to keep company too much with her. She talked alſo of the deceaſed, ſaying, that there was a very great difference between them though they were couſins. From hence moderately raiſing the paſſions of my mind and my heart, ſhe fell inſenſibly upon what ſhe came about. You know, ſaid ſhe, whether I love you or not, and I would alſo have you know how much I deſire to ſee you always content. You are now of full age to diſtinguiſh that it is time to think of what will become of you, and what ſtate of life you would chuſe, that you may not hereafter repent: the world is ſo full of deceit, that they that live the fartheſt from it enjoy the greateſt tranquility of mind: I have always admired the happineſs of thoſe that know how to find all the world in their cell, and that build their felicity in themſelves: all the flowers of the age have their thorns; vice triumphs in the world, becauſe the number of the vicious prevails; virtue is to be praiſed, but here it is perſecuted: there is nothing good but in appearance, and this ſelf-ſame appearance

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is not reſerved for thoſe that are the moſt worthy, but for thoſe alone that abuſe it moſt by doing harm to others in the world. Child, a thouſand circumſtances will unite for your comfort, with a deſign to make a competent figure: to diſhonour you, to make you contemptible and unhappy, one alone is enough; and the man the moſt vile upon earth, can hurt you more than a monarch can poſſibly make up to you.

I obſerved all this premeditated diſcourſe with impatience to know where it would end, becauſe ſhe proceeded with ſo much deliberation. I gave her now and then a reaſon, applauding her maxims, and uniting my ſentiments with hers. She was caught in the trap. My dear, ſays ſhe, how much this laudable diſpoſition delights me; perſevere in this, perſiſt againſt all obſtacles that may be put in your way by thoſe that think of any thing but your good, and don't confide, in circumſtances ſo delicate, either on me or yourſelf.

Madam, your mother, for what I know, has deſtined you for the great world; but ſhe does not reflect . . . . apropò, Have you anſwered that letter I gave you the other day? Not yet, I replied, but I will do it, and I'll let her

her know in it that I do not love the world; and if ſhe loves me, ſhe ought to agree that I ſhould live as far as poſſible from it. At theſe words ſhe embraced me tenderly; and walking together through a ſhady walk, the bell for ſupper rung; after ſupper I returned to my chamber, and wrote thus to my mother:

" Dear Mother,

The circumſtances that oblige you to hide from me my birth, happen leſs diſagreeable to me at preſent, ſince I have found in you a mother ſo worthy of my regard. By the hands of our governeſs I have received a letter that you have deigned to write me, and have red it with ſuch ſentiments of love as I never experienced before. For my greater joy and ſatisfaction I muſt now beg a favour of you, that is, to believe that I love you, tho' I have not the pleaſure to know you; and that ſhewing yourſelf a tender mother, I ſhall always ſhew myſelf a dutiful daughter. In regard to your perſon, I ſhall always deſire to know ſomething more, to be able to honour you as you merit; but all this I remit to your own judgment and prudence, and am content to be ſure that I am dear to you. For the remainder,

dear

dear mother, what with the ſweetneſs I enjoy in this my ſolitude, I don't know what to deſire more except that of the pleaſure of embracing you, and of ſeeing you fully content. Expecting with impatience that heaven will grant me that good fortune, in the mean time I render you my ſincere thanks for the favours you are continually diſpenſing me; and I hope you will enjoy the teſtimony that I here give you of my profound reſpect. I am

Your moſt dutiful
and obedient Daughter
D'A."

I got up very early next morning to read over this letter, and I found it, as it ought to be, to give into the way of thinking of my governeſs and my mother. I was content with myſelf, and it ſeemed to me I had done a great deal, having ſo well diſſembled my true ſentiments to delude the intentions of both who acted with ſo little ſincerity to me. In that firſt heat of youth and paſſion, I judged I had treated them as they merited: but how ſoon did I find that the paths of youth are indiſcreet and ſlippery, and that I with theſe arts deceived myſelf more than others. I car-

ried the letter that ſame morning to the governeſs, and deſired her to ſeal it, not doubting in the leaſt but ſhe would have curioſity enough to read it; but I was on the other hand certain, that ſhe would be, by that means, confirmed in the good opinion of me, in which I had left her the preceding day. Returning from her I met Celeſtina, who told me I was aſked for at the gate; ſo finding myſelf tolerably well dreſſed, I went down immediately, without ſuſpecting who it could be that enquired for me.

CHAP. IV.

My firſt Love with the Count of Termes.

ON the ground floor, where I was expected, I found the Count, who was amuſing himſelf with ſome pictures with which it was furniſhed. At the ſight of him my ſpirits were fluttered. After the uſual compliments, I proteſted that his viſit ſurpriſed me very much. He moſt obligingly anſwered me by begging an excuſe for his boldneſs, and deſiring that I would attribute the fault to that cordial friendſhip that had rendered me ſo ſenſible of the death of his ſiſter,

ſiſter, and entitled me to his reſpect were it only through gratitude.

My eager impatience to enter upon the diſcourſe of my box and the picture, did not permit that I ſhould loſe time in uſeleſs ceremonies; but the Count had no deſire to talk of that, and obliged me to be the firſt to introduce it, though abruptly. Sir, ſaid I, the mention of your ſiſter's death brings to my mind a change very extraordinary, that happened the other day; in this box, obſerve here, inſtead of the picture of my friend I find one that exactly reſembles you. This unexpected diſcourſe ſurpriſed him in ſuch a manner that he ſtarted back, and confuſedly ſaid, in changing the picture I could never have believed that I ſhould have offended you. I affected to be diſguſted, giving him to underſtand I wanted it back; whether he thought ſo or no, to exempt himſelf from taking it back again, he made a low bow and departed. Contrary to my inclination he deprived me of the pleaſure of his converſation; and when I retired to my chamber, I reproved myſelf bitterly. How much the paſſions are altered by the objects! I had acted in a manner conſiſtent with my age and character, yet my delicacy

ſeemed to be unſeaſonable; and as I was already touched at heart, I fell unexpectedly into a profound melancholy.

I don't intend by this to juſtify my weakneſs in the eyes of the public, I am condemn'd by myſelf; in thoſe circumſtances I ought to have made better uſe of my reaſon. The uncertainty of my birth demanded quite otherwiſe than a love engagement; but I am a woman; I was young, nor was I the only one that had began to love at ſo tender an age. To be ſenſible of love, it is enough there are men; the beginnings are flattering and ſweet: thoſe that have not experience of the world cannot foreſee the effects. Among the men there are faces that enchant one at firſt ſight. Add to this, that after having ſeen the Count often, occaſioned by his coming to ſee his ſiſter, I had overcome all little punctilios; and I don't know how, but all my tenderneſs for her returned to ſpeak in his favour. The grief at having loſt ſo fine an opportunity of letting him know my heart, deprived me of my ſleep and quiet: The day following I was ſtill buſied in theſe thoughts, when, contrary to all my expectations, a poor woman of the neighbourhood brought me, in the name

name of the Count of Termes this letter:

" Madam,

If you have any ſentiments of compaſſion for the picture that remains in your hands, I ſhould conſole myſelf for the loſs of a lovely ſiſter with the hopes of having found another in your perſon. I ſhall preſerve hers; be content that I remember both her and you. Forget me, however, if your heart will ſuffer it; but be perſuaded, that the hope of being in your's, can only make me amends for a loſs in which you yourſelf have ſo great a ſhare. I am, with all reſpect,

Your moſt humble,
and moſt obedient Servant,
TERMES."

This letter entirely changed me from what I was; before I read it, I told the perſon that brought it to return in two hours for the anſwer: the anſwering it did not coſt much violence to my modeſty; as the Count treated me like a ſiſter, it juſtified, in ſome meaſure, my forwardneſs; I continued to anſwer him in the ſame ſtyle, and wrote him, That as things ſtood on the ſame terms by him

mentioned, I ſhould eſteem myſelf honoured, if he thought me worthy of any part of that eſteem and conſideration that he had had for a ſiſter, who neither by him or me could be enough eſteemed. The meſſenger returned to me at the preciſe hour; I gave her the letter, which ſhe received, with ſo much aſſiduity to carry it immediately, that I judged that day would not paſs without the Count's coming again to ſee me. Here he is, in fact, in about an hour after, with a laughing and intrepid air as if he was certain of the conqueſt he meditated. How great is my felicity, ſays he ſmiling, to find you ſo ſerene, after the diſpleaſure I occaſioned you without intending it? to a ſoul like your's, that judges rightly, reaſon is not wanting to juſtify my aſſurance: your letter to me gave me great conſolation, making me hope that I have found in you one half of my ſelf; and this hope alone is enough that I ſhould excuſe your diſobliging auſterity. It's eaſy to be imagined, that by what I had ſaid I could not leſſen in him the heat of theſe his amorous hopes. Two hours of converſation were more than enough to transform a brother and ſiſter by name only, into two paſſionate lovers.

Our

Our love, more than fraternal, was no longer ſtifled in our breaſts; after this enſued reciprocal declarations, and the moſt ſincere proteſtations; nor ſhould we have finiſhed ſo ſoon if Madam Rennes, whom I had not ſeen all that day, had not ſurpriſed and interrupted us. I ſaw rage painted in her countenance, at having found me in a cloſe converſation with her couſin. The Count, who alſo ſaw it, changed immediately his language to take off any ſuſpicion, by telling her, that ſhe ſeemed much troubled, and that he deſired to know the reaſon that had occaſioned it. She gueſſed the motive of his coming, and without diſſimulation gave him to underſtand, that ſo long a viſit ſhe did not think well of. The Count began to joke, the better to perſuade her of his indifference in regard to me; but ſeeing he did it without the deſired effect, he departed in a few moments, and ſhe went off laughing. I did not take any notice of her behaviour, becauſe I was too much overcome with joy at having gained ſo much ground in a country where I wanted to reign.

To apologize for my weakneſs, I muſt ſay, that the Count of Termes was an amiable Chevalier, that he had merit,

merit, ſpirit, and virtue; and that I would very willingly have given him an abſolute dominion over my heart, if I had been my own miſtreſs. Madam Rennes began from that day to look with jealous eyes on all our motions; but in ſpite of her vigilance, we did not ſee each other leſs than three or four times a week for the two following months. The governeſs was ſoon apprized of our friendſhip; ſhe gave me to underſtand that ſhe ſhould be better pleaſed if I could diſpenſe with theſe viſits leſs frequently, without however telling the Count that this came from her. I received theſe orders with all reſpect, but anſwered, that I would not break it to that gentleman ſo ſuddenly; that I ſhould inſenſibly diſpoſe him to comply; and that this civil regard was owing to a perſon of his character, that I had been acquainted with ſo long a time. My love did not permit me to proceed with that caution that was preſcribed to me: I ſtill continued to receive the viſits of the Count as uſual; I confided in the meaſures already taken, to be able to ſee each other without danger; and all was truly concerted, that I ſhould be his wife; when all on a ſudden it was intimated to me, not

to

to see him any more! Let those imagine, who know what love is in the heart of a girl, what was then my situation, and what ideas came immediately into my mind.

The order seemed to me a certain presage that they already thought of shutting me up by main force in a cloyster. The distance of the Count cut off every advice and assistance; besides, I was agitated with the apprehension of that violence the Count would commit on himself: it seemed to me, that the not seeing him was already the first step to his entirely forgetting me; and the sole suspicion of this fatal forgetfulness, reduced me to the utmost desperation. On the other hand, I dared not shew the least sign of my inward troubles, not to confirm the suspicions of those that attentively observed me. The constraint I put on myself is incredible: when I was alone, I destroyed myself in tears; when any one arrived, I affected gaity and sprightliness that cost me the greatest reluctance. To my succour I called my most serious reflections; I painted my lover as my ideas were, a person of honour; and that, in spight of so many contrarieties, he would never leave to love me: I figured

gured to myſelf, that my ſpirits were ſuperior to all proofs; and, with the example of a thouſand love-adventures read in books, I took my preſent calamity for an infallible ſign of my being one day happy. Had any one told me how far ſuch a day was off, and how long I had to ſigh, perhaps I had been more wiſe. No one could penetrate to know what paſſed within me; my counſellors were, deſpair and love. The Count knew nothing of me for two weeks afterwards, nor could I riſk his having any news of me: from whence all my reflections finiſhed, by ſeconding the impulſes of my nature, and furniſhing myſelf with virile courage againſt all the caprices of my perverſe fortune.

One day, in which I found myſelf more than ever diſpoſed to undertake any thing not to lead a life worſe than death, Celiſtina took me apart and put into my hand a billet from the Count, which was not ſealed, and contained only theſe few words:

" Madam,

I have no more time than to adviſe you of my immediate departure for the army in Italy. The orders that I have received neither admit of delay or reply.

ply. Wherever I am, I ſhall be always your's. Preſerve yourſelf faithful, and hope."

This news was to me like a clap of thunder. The hand writing was the Count de Termes; but the ſtyle, the brevity, the want of the name, a departure ſo precipitate and unexpected—altogether was a myſtery to me of which I did not comprehend one word. I interrogated Celiſtina how ſhe had got that paper; ſhe had nothing more to tell me, than that ſhe had it from a friend of hers that had it from the Count's own hand two days before. Then he is departed! cried I, almoſt beſide myſelf, he is departed! nor may I hope to ſee him any more! This ſtroke, I need no longer doubt, comes from my mother; ſhe takes from me, by her ſecret management, a huſband, becauſe ſhe would have me buried in a cloyſter; but no, it ſhall not be ſo, if it ſhould coſt me my life. Thus I went on, not knowing what I ſaid; my furious paſſion had taken away my ſenſes, nor did I perceive that, by Celiſtina's being preſent, I betrayed a ſecret which, till that time, I had kept with ſo much regard: the ſtone was flung, nor did it

ſignify

ſignify witholding my arm, as it would go where deſtin'd. By theſe few words Celiſtina comprehended all. I had already a thouſand proofs of her fidelity; but then, with tears in her eyes, ſhe ſhewed me in ſuch a manner her heart, that I had not the leaſt motive to repent of my having admitted her to my confidence; in order to conſole me, ſhe adviſed me to hope that I ſhould be one day happy. I ſhall be, anſwered I reſolutely; it ſhall be, dear Celiſtina, if you will have it ſo. My felicity is not to be hoped for in this place; to find it, it is neceſſary that I ſhould be put at liberty; and if you don't aſſiſt me in this great undertaking, prepare yourſelf to ſee me die a deſperate death. Theſe words, pronounced by me with a vivacity ſuperior to my ſex, made ſuch an impreſſion on her that ſhe did not know how to anſwer me better than by throwing herſelf at my feet, cloſely embracing my knees, and proteſting that for me ſhe would give her own life. In raiſing her from the ground, I kiſs'd her with the love of a ſiſter; and to profit of her intents, ſo much in my favour, I immediately communicated to her my thoughts, and charged her with the neceſſity there was to put them into execution.

execution. I gave her all I had that was valuable, in cloaths, jewels, and silver, that she might sell them privately; and in a few days she brought me three hundred pistoles, which, added to the hundred I had received by order of my mother, enlarged my heart, and put me in such a state that I did not care for all the world. This being done, I gave her directions to provide every thing necessary to dress me in the habit of a man; I told her that whatever remained in my trunk, should be her own, and that this would be a proof of my love and gratitude, and, at the same time, a consolation in the necessity I was under to separate myself from her. Separate yourself from me! said she, crying, this shall never be; I don't know, dear Madam, what your intentions are, but I very well know my own fixed resolution: wherefoever your steps are turned to, I will follow you; with you I may say I have been brought up, and with you I will die; and if you have the heart to leave me behind, you will be unworthy of that felicity I wish you, and which you will procure by my means, at the price of all my future happiness. I prevented her from going on at this rate, with intention that she

might make reflections more ſerious, and more ſuitable to my reputation. I was ſenſible that my fortune and honour were at ſtake, and I could never have enjoyed a quiet hour, had I been in any means acceſſary to her ruin: more unhappy myſelf could not be, whatever happened to me; but I dreaded the conſequences of involving her in my misfortunes. Theſe my objections were all to no purpoſe, Celiſtina inſiſted upon going with me, and, after various arguments, for and againſt, it was at length concluded between us that we ſhould make our eſcape together; and ſhe took upon her the care of diſpoſing things in a proper manner, that our flight ſhould not be either diſcovered or interrupted.

CHAP. V.

My Flight from the Convent of Avignon in Man's Apparel.

I Am now come to that extraordinary part of my life which was the foundation of a thouſand afflictions, and which formed the extravagant thread of theſe my uncommon adventures, reſolved on by me in the heat of my vehement paſſion, and carried into execution

cution in cool blood with as much indifference and reſolution as if the conſequences were quite immaterial. My birth was a ſecret, my education very auſtere, my deſtiny undoubtedly contrary to my inclinations; a mother unknown, a politic governeſs, a lover loſt, a cloyſter waiting for me, were reaſons that would juſtify my proceeding to all the world, if I was not the firſt to condemn it, that it might not ſerve others for an example: at preſent I know that by ſuch a precipitate undertaking fortune conducted which way ſhe pleaſed; but perhaps ſhe would have guided me ſtill by ways leſs fatal and dangerous, nor ought the happy ſucceſs of a blameable undertaking to excuſe the raſhneſs of my conduct.

In the ſpace of a few days Celiſtina had put every thing in order, that was needful for our departure, and came to adviſe with me on the manner in which I ought to act in the execution of our deſign. At day-break I was to go down into the garden, where ſhe was to have ready a ladder for me to ſcale the walls: at the gates being opened we were to go out of the city and to walk to Sorgues, about a league and half diſtant from Avignon, where a returned chaiſe for

Lyons was to wait for us, for which ſhe had agreed to pay fifteen livres. In our ſituation nothing could fall out better; I kiſſed and embraced her with joy at having ſo well ſeconded my intentions; I will, ſaid Celiſtina, in the mean time tell the family that you find yourſelf much indiſpoſed, and deſire them not to wait for you at ſupper; but that I will take ſomething for you to your own chamber: ſo that if they ſhould not ſee you betimes to-morrow morning, it may prevent their immediate ſuſpicion. By this contrivance no one came up to diſturb me in my apartment. Celiſtina went away pretty late, telling them at the gate that ſhe ſhould not return, as ſhe propoſed to tarry that night with a near relation of hers at the point of death. Whatever I had that was valuable was taken by little and little out of the houſe and ſold. The night ſeemed very tedious; but at laſt the moment arrived that I ſo much wiſhed for to be out of my priſon. At the firſt appearance of the morning I jumped from the bed, where I had lain all night in my cloaths, and walking ſoftly down, took the way to the garden. At the place appointed I found Celiſtina, who was already mounted upon the top of

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the wall and was there waiting for me. She then drew up the ladder by which she had got up on the out-side, and let it down for me who was within, that I might get upon the wall: I did so with incredible haste, and one after the other, we descended by the same ladder into the street, where a relation of Celestina, who was already in the secret, took me in her arms, and immediately conducted us to her house. This enterprize was a thing of great moment for a woman, for a young woman of my age, who had been educated under the most strict discipline. Perhaps it was either the unexpected joy of seeing myself at liberty, or thro' fear of being caught on my flight, I was taken with such a heart-beating that I trembled from head to foot, as if I dreaded every moment to be my last. Having revived my spirits with a glass of cordial, with which our friend was opportunely provided, Celestina began to dress my hair after the fashion that men wear it. I dressed myself also in man's apparel not very gay, but of a good taste and genteel. She put on herself a dress after the English fashion for travelling; and made me give her my arm, as if I had been her gallant, and after bidding

adieu to our confidant, we walked haſtily to get out of the city. The firſt gate that opened was that near the river; we arrived there juſt as the drawbridge was letting down, and paſſed ſlowly over without being taken notice of by any body. We went out into the country as if with deſign to take a cool walk in the morning; and, when there was no danger of our being obſerved, we haſtened on, taking the direct road to Sorgues. I walked ſo faſt, that Celiſtina could hardly keep up with me; Madam, ſays ſhe, laughing, ſince you came from Avignon you have wings to your feet. It is neceſſary to have them, I replied, that we may not be overtaken: I think I have the governeſs at my back, and feel her carrying me by force back again to my cell. Here I ſtopped, and being ſeized with a ſpirit of liberty, which was all the effect of my weakneſs, I called on heaven for its curſes on my head if ever it ſhould come into my thoughts to return back to my priſon, or liſten to any one who ſhould adviſe me to it. Celiſtina believing I meant her, aſſured me, that ſhe never ſhould have ſpoke of it, and that the receding was unbecoming a female philoſopher. By this

time

time the ſun was riſen, and ſhe, giving me a glance from head to foot, began to laugh without my knowing the reaſon A fine huſband! ſaid ſhe, ſtill laughing, a fine huſband that I have found without looking for one! What think you, added I, don't I make a ſufficient figure in this dreſs? The figure is good, replied ſhe, but for a huſband the figure is not enough: the caſe is really extravagant, that one girl ſhould be huſband to another, but in our circumſtances nothing can be thought of better; beſides, your diſguiſe now puts you in poſſeſſion of a liberty that is not familiar to our ſex; you alſo ſhut the mouth of ſcandal, becauſe to a wife in company with her huſband, and to a huſband in company with his wife, all is permitted. Celiſtina ſpoke in this joking manner, but her extravagant idea pleaſed me when more ſerious; and this part of being thought man and wife wherever we went, ſeemed to me to be quite proper to exempt us from the reſearches of the curious, and to be leſs expoſed to the danger of being diſcovered. Since it is to be ſo, ſaid ſhe, it is neceſſary to put a name to the pretended perſonage that you are to repreſent in the world, and to feign

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the country in which you was born, the education with which you was brought up, the character that your family ſuſtains, and, laſtly, the motives you have in travelling Europe in company with your wife. All theſe precautions were neceſſary, that we might not vary, whenever ſpeaking of ourſelves, and to elude the ſagacity of thoſe that might follow us, and who, by private letters, or the public papers might get intelligence of us by particular deſcriptions. It was concluded between us, that I ſhould pretend to be an Italian nobleman by birth, and that I ſhould ſay I was travelling to foreign courts in ſearch of preferment; as to the name that I was to take upon me, we were not a little embarraſſed to find one that was unknown to all the world, and by which we ſhould not put ourſelves in danger of being diſcovered: after much conſideration it was concluded that I ſhould be called Count Richard, and ſhe ſhould paſs for Madam the Counteſs, my wife. Upon this extravagant idea what did not Celiſtina ſay, and what did ſhe not do to divert me; ſhe aſſerted that all this falſhood would coſt but one word; it being uſual for me, in our language, to

call

call her my chamber-maid, it was enough that I omitted that word chambermaid and ſhe immediately became my wife: ſhe added, that it was proper we ſhould think of celebrating the nuptials, which ſhe would have done privately for the ſake of œconomy; that we could ſleep together without fear of having any children born to augment the expences of the family. With ſuch like diſcourſes we arrived at Sorgues. Though the going on foot incommoded me, I walked as nimble as if I had ſerved five or ſix campaigns in a regiment of infantry; the joy of being at liberty gave me vigour; the hopes of bettering my condition would have made me walk to the Antipodes. About ten o'clock in the morning we arrived at Sorgues, where I found the chaiſe ready, and mounting it immediately we proceeded on our road. This was very near the hour in which they muſt diſcover my flight. I was under no apprehenſion of purſuit from the convent, but pleaſed myſelf with the reflection of what would be ſaid then in Avignon of this affair of mine: I thought I ſaw all theſe good women in diſorder and confuſion; ſome running

ning up and down looking for me thro' all the houſe; others calling with a loud voice the governeſs of the place, and meeting her, cry out, Ah! Madam, don't you know Madam D'Arvile is gone off? ſhe is not to be found all over the houſe; her chamber is [illegible], ſomebody has certainly aſſiſted her; ſhe muſt be followed before ſhe gets too far off. The thought that pleaſed me moſt was, that of having known ſo well how to elude their vigilance, and of being revenged on my mother who had prohibited me all commerce with the Count, and who, by force of fair words, would ſacrifice me to a cloyſter, to which heaven had not called me. Had they taken proper methods they might eaſily have overtaken us; but knowing what ſort of people I had to deal with, this thought did not give me the leaſt uneaſineſs: confuſion prevailed with them rather than prudent council; they vented in uſeleſs talk their wonder, and wrangling upon the manner of the event, they neglected the remedy which they ought, in haſte, to have laid hold of: an attentive father, a man of ſenſe, might have overtaken us before we had arrived at Sorgues, as we made no great haſte to our horſes. Tho' I had the boldneſs

neſs to project a flight, I am debtor for having executed it ſo happily, not ſo much to my own ſagacity and good fortune, as to the indolent neglectfulneſs of thoſe who lament it without benefit, and who know not how to remedy it, as I ſhall ſhew hereafter.

CHAP. VI.

My Arrival at Lyons, and a Reſolution taken to traffic.

IN the duſk of the evening we arrived at Lyons; and, ſome few days after our arrival, I underſtood by the diſcourſe that my flight was public through all the city. It was ſaid, that a young woman of illuſtrious birth was ſuddenly gone from the nunnery of Avignon, and that they could hear no news of her. They related the particulars of my flight quite contrary to what they were in reality; they gave the plaineſt tokens of my flight, and manner of my dreſs; and added, that ſearch had been made at the city gates of Avignon for ſuch a perſon, and dreſſed in ſuch a manner, and were aſſured, that no ſuch perſon had been ſeen to go out of the city, and that the common opinion was that I was ſtill in Avignon, hid in ſome

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particular houſe; there were alſo thoſe that would frankly aſſert, that I had taken refuge in the Count de Termes's palace. Thus people deceive themſelves in their own judgment; and whatever happens in public report is ever ſubject to theſe variations. They might ſeek me as much as they pleaſed in Avignon, and not have found me; and on the other hand, it was very true that they had not ſeen me go out of the city, as the changing of my dreſs had deceived them. It was very well that there only they expected to find me, and did not follow me farther; but making the figure of a married man, they could not even ſuſpect that there was a woman, hid under my cloaths. Thus we remained quiet ſome days in our lodgings at Lyons, and, having nothing elſe to employ us, we were continually making ſerious reflections on futurity. At Lyons we could not always remain; not having there any connections we might ſoon be ſuſpected and found out. To proſecute our journey any farther, would be expenſive, and diminiſh our finances every day, with travelling and the charges of chaiſe-hire; but then how could we live in this place, and find money to ſupply our wants?

wants? from these thoughts, which gave me much trouble, Celistina endeavoured to divert me, by jesting; You are a charming gentleman, says she to me; make your court to some of those ladies, it is impossible but that you will make some conquest, and then our fortune is made. There should be something else, my dear wife, answered I, in our case; few of those women are to be found that make mens fortune; and, by seeking for such, a thousandare to be met with that may be our ruin; to gain their confidence, you must second their humours, and their extravagant fancies, and, by what I have hitherto read and understood, will cost one a treasure. It is not that sprightliness, good grace, and talents, that distinguish men in the most improving conversation; but gaming, public shews, dinners, parties of pleasures, and buffooneries, are the soul of the modern taste; and he is most esteemed who spends most like a fool, or by desperate playing.

If I was to follow this trade, of the five hundred pistoles which I have at present, in five days I should not have a farthing; and the vain hope of an uncertain conquest, would cost me a certain loss. Then let us think of some-

thing elſe, replied Celiſtina; nor will we depart from the maxims of ſo reaſonable a philoſophy, which makes me more and more in love with you. The money which we have is our beſt friend; we do not expect them from any other part; from this we have our ſuſtenance, and, as we have nothing but ourſelves to keep, let us expend it to ſome advantage: we are in a country where commerce flouriſhes, and where there are to be purchaſed rich embroidered ſilks, both in gold and ſilver, and for which a much greater price is paid in all the cities of Europe; let us put ourſelves into trade, by laying out in merchandize the major part of the money you have; we will ſell them again in other countries, by which means the capital will be reſerved intire, and by the profits of the ſame, as many others have done, we ſhall defray our expences.

This project was leſs dangerous than the other, but this alſo had its difficulties: our capital was too ſmall to bring a profit ſufficient to ſupply all our neceſsities; for a lucrative trade, it required a large ſum, or great credit; the chief ſupport of the richeſt and moſt flouriſhing traders depends upon credit; and ſuch may have in their magazines

gazines a capital of one hundred thouſand crowns, and be in debt half a million; but they ſeldom fail, becauſe they conſtantly find freſh ſupplies to maintain their credit. Beſides all this, ſaid I to my wife, to trade with profit, it is neceſſary to know accompts, and the advantages in buying and ſelling; in all this, we are in the dark; and I ſhould not be leſs embroil'd by being a merchant, than a phyſician. a lawyer, or a ſoldier. To theſe difficulties Celiſtina found a remedy by the example of many women of her acquaintance, who, with a very ſmall beginning, were become very rich merchants; and inſiſted that this was the beſt party for us. She ſaid ſhe would ſpeak of it, as a thing of her own, to our landlady: that ſhe could give her ſome light in theſe affairs. I did not oppoſe her deſire, as I judged her to be a woman of art and cunning; and I thought I could confide in her. Mrs. Tavenot, ſo was my landlady called, was daughter to a rich merchant, and a man of credit, but who had failed by living too high: the late failure of her father had not permitted her to find a huſband, ſuch as ſhe deſerved: ſhe was not however debaſed by her marriage, as ſhe had mar-

ried an officer with whom she had lived a little more than four years, and who was killed at the siege of Barcelona; she remained a widow, maintaining herself by a little traffic, and by letting ready-furnished lodgings to people of distinction. To her hastened Celistina, and, in full confidence of her intentions, she received all the instructions that were necessary to us on that head. She conducted her through all the city, and made her acquainted with the richest merchants in Lyons; she shewed her all kinds of stuffs and silks of different qualities; she taught her the propereſt method to be taken in buying, and where she might sell them again; she contracted for the price of the same; upon the whole, she made her lay out, in so much goods, four hundred pistoles, assuring her, that, if she followed her advice, she would get five hundred pistoles for them when ever she sold them. While Celistina was going about these affairs, which could not be dispatched in one day, I passed my time in reading, in my lodgings, all the good books that had been printed lately: two, among the rest, I read with incredible delight more than once; and from these I learned a great deal: the one was intitled,

tled, " Philoſophy for Women," the other, " The Art of Thinking Well ;" the firſt was wrote in French, the ſecond in Engliſh ; and both, before I had any great practice in the world, in theſe few days taught me how to live. Reading was never any trouble to me ; but one day, in particular, I found I had need of ſome other amuſement ; and as Celiſtina never returned home in the day, I went out to paſs half an hour in a coffee-houſe, a very little way diſtant from my lodgings ; and finding at the door an officer, I went in with him : we ſaluted, and ſate down together. There were, on one of the tables, the news-papers of the day ; the waiter preſented the officer with them, but he only ran them over, and gave them to me that I might divert myſelf, if I had a mind to read them. I ran my eye immediately over them till I came to the date from Avignon, and there I found a long ſtory of my flight. By Celiſtina's confidant many circumſtances had been related ; ſhe had been ſeen in a Jew's ſhop buying ſome mens cloaths, and they waited till the Jew returned from the country, where he was gone for a few days, that they might learn ſome other notice more particular and preciſe. Reading this

article in the Gazette, I gave no ſign of ſurprize, though I was not at all quiet in my mind. There was in the coffee-houſe, one of thoſe people called politicians, who obſerve with more greedineſs the public paper, than they would the will of ſome of their relations. He aſked me immediately, if I had made any reflection upon what was from Avignon, and what was my opinion of that ſtory? I anſwered coolly, that ſuch relations as theſe were in general falſe, or very much altered; that the Gazette writers, to fill up their paper, make of a fly an elephant; and that if the fact was true of the young woman of Avignon, by the next ordinary poſt there would be ſomething more, becauſe ſhe could not be able to keep herſelf long hid. I thought by this, that I had ſhut the mouth of this news-monger; but he aſked me a thouſand queſtions, as if he had known by his ſmell that I was woman: as good fortune for me would have it, a coach ſtopped at the door of the coffee-houſe; I faced about to the perſon that was within, though I had never ſeen him in my life before; I gave him my hat, and eluded, by this ſtratagem, the ſagacity

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of the other, who found himſelf confuſed in his ſuſpicions.

CHAP. VII.

A Friendſhip contracted by me at Lyons with Mr. D'Arcore.

THE perſon ſaluted by me at his coming out of his coach, was a young gentleman of about twenty-five years of age; of an open air, and obliging carriage. He returned my ſalute without ſhewing himſelf the leaſt ſurpriſed, and as if I had been his friend for many years. After having ordered the coachman to return in an hour, he took me by the hand, and, making me ſit down, placed himſelf oppoſite to me. Seeing the papers upon the table, he aſked me if I had read them, and what news there was? Nothing, Sir, ſaid I, but an account of the flight of a certain girl from a nunnery at Avignon, of which account I am very doubtful, becauſe the writers of the Gazettes, in theſe barren times of news, catch at any thing for the ſake of having ſomething to write. As to that, replied he, the fact is very true; I have ſeveral letters from Avignon that mention it: which alſo ſay, that preſſing orders are ſent every

ry where, that all poſſible ſearch is to be made for that young lady, and that they are to apprehend her, and keep her, wherever ſhe is found. For my part, ſaid he, there is no danger that I ſhall ever take a thought to look after her, or become a ſpy, if I could find her. They pretend to ſay, that ſhe has taken the road to Marſeilles, to embark on board ſome ſhip for Holland. We may ſuppoſe, replied I, that in this flight love has had a part, or that ſhe has been reduced to deſparation by ſome violence? I don't know, ſaid he, as the accounts are ſo confuſed and different; all ſay, that her parents had deſtined her for a cloyſter, and that ſhe was inconſolable on the ſudden departure of a gentleman of her acquaintance: let what will be the reaſon, I am ſorry for it; as they write me, that ſhe is a moſt amiable young lady, and of a ſpirit ſuperior to her ſex: her good qualifications make me compaſſionate her troubles; and I am ſorry that ſhe is not come directly to Lyons, where ſhe ſhould not have wanted protection and reception. I did not loſe one word of what he ſaid; and already, upon his pleaſing expreſſions, my vanity flattered me, that I might have reaſon to hope

the beſt. Being very happy at having found one that pitied me without knowing me, I ſeemed to be no longer in danger; becauſe he would have aſſiſted me much more, if I had made myſelf known to him. With theſe thoughts I endeavoured to appear chearful. Coffee being brought, he inſiſted upon my taking another diſh to keep him company. Juſt at this inſtant came a footman, and ſaid to him, Sir, my lady ſent me to aſk you, if you will let her have the horſe, that ſhe ſpoke to you about, for twenty piſtoles? He anſwered roughly, No; tell your miſtreſs, from me, that I have changed my mind, and that I will not ſell that horſe. This is a horſe, ſaid he, turning to me, that I wanted to get rid of; and I had ſold him to my ſiſter for the half of what he coſt me. It is now fifteen days that ſhe has been beating down the price, and now goes increaſing it by a crown at a time. Rather than be plagued for ſuch a trifle, I'll take back my horſe, and ſhe may provide herſelf ſomewhere elſe. Among the other advices Celiſtina had got from my landlady, was that of providing a horſe, to tranſport our goods and cloaths, where we pleaſed, with leſs expence. I thought on it then. And

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are you reſolved, ſaid I to my friend, not to ſell the horſe to your ſiſter? or do you do it out of revenge? He anſwered me ſeriouſly that he would rather give him to any body elſe than ſell him to her; there is nothing that diſobliges me more, than her ſtingineſs in making a bargain. Well, ſaid I, if you'll ſell him, I'll buy him, as I have juſt now need of one. With all my heart, replied he; but you muſt know, that he is better for a coach than for a ſaddle: I had the pair, and they coſt me four hundred crowns; but having loſt one, I have never been able to match the one that remains; for which reaſon, I want to get rid of him. That ſignifies nothing, replied I, he will ſerve me to carry my portmanteau; I want to go to Orleans, and that by ſhort journeys, to do ſome buſineſs of mine, and to ſee, at the ſame time, the moſt famous city of Burgundy; and for this route the horſe will ſerve me wonderfully well; and when I have done with him, I can always get for him what he coſt me. That's very true, replied he, you think as you ought; nor can you find a better horſe for your purpoſe: let us take another diſh of coffee, and then you'll do me the honour to go home

home with me to my houſe, where you ſhall ſee him, and we will agree for him in four words. I imagine that from Orleans you will go to Paris; it is time, at your age, that you had ſeen that metropolis: there you will make conqueſts; and, in a country like that, where the handſomeneſs of a man's perſon is eſteemed, I do not know how you will be able to pleaſe ſome, without diſguſting others. Whenever it is ſo, anſwered I, I'll contrive to do for the beſt; and ſo ſaying, he made me ſtep into the coach, and conducted me, in his company, to the door of his palace. Stepping out of the coach, I ſaw immediately that it was not a houſe belonging to a poor man. We went into a ſpacious court yard, all paved with marble, ſurrounded with a double order of pillows, and adorned with four fountains, that threw over, in four great ſhells of braſs, an artificial ſhower of rain. From thence he conducted me into a hall, adorned with ſtucco-work, and painted in the higheſt taſte. He then ordered the horſe to be brought. Here he is, ſaid he; and I'll maintain him to be without any defect. He looked well to the eye; but to judge of him, and what to make of him, there

there required something more than to know how to scale a garden-wall. As to this, said I, I'll take him upon your word; and be so good as to tell me the price, and you shall be satisfied immediately. I do not look for this now, answered he, and to talk of that we have time enough. It is still very hot, and a good while since we drank coffee; I hope you won't refuse me the honour of tasting a bottle of my wine; and we will drink it iced, that it may be the cooler. I did all possible to excuse myself, but his courteous behaviour prevented my refusal, and I found it necessary to oblige him; and while the wine was cooling in ice, we took a turn in the garden. For a private gentleman, I never saw a more fine and delicious spot: green-houses, shady walks, odorous hedges, a continued carpet in the path embellished with flowers, all things that delighted the sight, and attracted my wonder. In the midst of these delights, and among so many courtesies that I had received, I found myself very much embarrassed. I was afraid that I should not be able to sustain, as I ought, the person of a man before one of so refined a taste, and that he would not let me depart, after having obliged

obliged me ſo much, without deſiring to know ſomething of me, and my condition of life. Being under a neceſſity to appear as a man of quality, I did not know how to get off, with honour, from a converſation that I had not foreſeen, and that ſeemed to me ſuſpicious. I ſtudied the propereſt manner to anſwer any queſtions of that ſort; but, as good fortune would have it, there was no need, as he aſked nothing on this head. From the garden we returned to the hall, where I found a magnificent collation prepared. I was obliged to eat and drink to pleaſe him; but could not find any opportunity to get away, and more than once I attempted to take my leave, but he ſtill detained me by his obliging behaviour; proteſting, that my perſon pleaſed him, and that my company gave him the higheſt ſatisfaction. We talked on a hundred different things, but nothing on my affairs; and this his civil indifference pleaſed me more than all the reſt. Curious people are frequently very troubleſome; diſcourſing with ſtrangers, they think they have an indiſputable right to know all; and they do not reflect, that thoſe who travel in a ſtrange country, have a thouſand reaſons for telling only what they pleaſe.

Being almoſt night, I hoped at laſt that he would permit me to go: but how was I perplexed when I underſtood, from my obliging and courteous benefactor, that he would have me ſtay and ſup with him. Wait; ſaid he to me, to intice you more, there are certain young ladies and gentlemen, of my acquaintance, perſons of merit, condition, and ſpirit, that are worthy of your friendſhip, and they will keep you in good converſation, while ſupping. I was more than half perſuaded; but not knowing where all this civility would end, I was the more deſirous to get away. Not ſucceeding in any excuſe, I was obliged at laſt to confeſs, that I would have remained very willingly, to oblige him, if an indiſpenſable neceſſity had not called me to my lodgings. Since it is ſo, ſaid he, I won't uſe violence; but if I am to loſe your agreeable company, conſole me for ſuch a loſs, by telling me, what indiſpenſable neceſſity hinders you from ſtaying here. For this there was no remedy; I was obliged to confeſs, with ſome repugnance to myſelf, that my wife was expecting me at home; and that, at my being abſent, ſhe would be in continual pain all the night. Your wife, replied

plied he, amazed and surprised, your wife! I will absolutely have the honour of seeing her: I do not in the least doubt but that she is worthy of you; and if, at an age so young, you are bound to a woman, one must say, that your choice is praise-worthy. At table we will talk of your adventures; for the young ladies that are to be here, delight much in such stories: permit me, in the interim, to send my coach to bring her here, because we absolutely will not sup without her. As he was speaking a footman brought him a letter, and he ordered him to bring pen and ink, desiring me to write two lines to my wife, that we were waiting for her, and by that means she could have no difficulty in coming. I complied, as I could not do otherwise; and together with Celistina he sent for Madam Tavenot, she being known to him before she was married. The coach went, and returned in half an hour. When he heard the coach arrive, he ran to hand out the Countess, my wife; I did the same to Madam Tavenot, for simple conveniency; but could hardly refrain from laughter, to see how Celistina received and answered to his compliments. I had time to inform myself

who this gentleman was: ſhe told me, that his name was Monſieur D'Arcore, that he was not a nobleman, but that he was the richeſt man in the city; and that his chief pleaſure conſiſted in making himſelf friends, in enjoying good company, and in obliging, by force of benefits, all perſons of merit.

CHAP. VIII.

Characters of ſome ridiculous Perſons.

SOON after they arrived, another coach ſtopped at the gate, with ſome relations and friends of Monſ. D'Arcore, who ſaluted us as familiarly as if we had known each other many years. No perſon had ever more need of extraordinary preſence of mind, than Celiſtina and myſelf on this occaſion. All women are by nature curious, but theſe were doubly ſo; as the more queſtions they aſked, the more they believed they obliged us, by giving us motives for converſation. Celiſtina was a woman of a good underſtanding, ſpoke like an orator; and to joke with with gallantry, none was equal to her. I had had very little practice in the world; but however I was not one of thoſe women that buy glow-worms for lanterns

lanterns, and aſk, for want of converſation, if the ſea produces corn as well as ſand. To anſwer properly all their queſtions, I was obliged every moment to rack my invention, and had the good fortune to anſwer every thing, that was put to me, to the ſatisfaction of the company in general. Monſieur D'Arcore, after having left us ſome minutes, returned, ſaying, Sir, it is time to ſee if my cook has known how to pleaſe you; and, with this joke, made us ſit down to ſupper, which was dreſſed in the higheſt taſte, and very elegant. I muſt confeſs my appetite was diminiſhed greatly, by my apprehenſions that Monſieur D'Arcore would begin the diſcourſe upon the ſtory from Avignon; and if the company had obſerved in me any thing effeminate, I ſhould certainly have been diſcovered in that meeting. The leaſt talk upon that topic would have put me to the bluſh; and my baſhfulneſs was ſufficient to excite, in others, ſome ſuſpicions. Supper being over, they began to ſing the airs of the opera for that year: Celiſtina alſo ſung to pleaſe the company; and accidentally obſerving that I underſtood muſic, they preſſed me ſo much, that, not to make a ridiculous figure, I tuned an Italian

air, which I had perfectly in my memory. At the first cadence they all clapped their hands; and Mr. D'Arcore cried out, that I had a woman's voice, and that he never heard a more sweet and delicate one than mine. I thought I should have swooned away at these words: I endeavoured to conceal my blushes, by a feigned laugh; and Celistina, to turn the discourse, began to talk about the stuffs that she had bought that day, declaring, that she never had laid out her money to better advantage. There was no occasion for any thing more; the discourse immediately changed, and nothing was talked of but silks, their colours, and fashions. Just in this interim the clock struck twelve, and all were for returning to their own houses; but Mr. D'Arcore would not permit, he having assigned every one their apartment, and we all retired to repose ourselves. My mind was taken up with the thoughts where this extravagant civility would end; it seemed to me, that all was a riddle; and seeing that he distinguished me above all the others, I could not persuade myself that he would use all this distinction to a man; Celistina also could not think otherwise. We talked

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about it moſt part of the night, but without reſolving on any thing. When the morning was pretty well advanced, I got up; but Madam Tavenot no ſooner heard me up, than ſhe came into my chamber, and aſked me, what I thought of our genteel hoſt? I anſwered her, that I thought him the only one in the world, that made ſo much of perſons that he had never known before. And with all this, ſaid ſhe, he is only the ſon of a merchant, ſuch as my father was; he has ſucceeded in buſineſs extreamly well, and my father was ruined: this gentleman, being heir, after his father's death renounced his buſineſs, and thinks of nothing but enjoying what was left him, but that without ruining himſelf: he does not ſpend profuſely, but he will have every thing that is neceſſary. Inſtead of letting himſelf be impoveriſhed by a troop of ſervants, ſworn enemies to their maſters, he is not deſirous of making a great ſhew of pomp and magnificence; and keeps only a cook, a coachman, and two footmen. He tranſacts his own buſineſs for amuſement; and employs neither agent, ſteward, or ſecretary; but at his table he will have, both at dinner and ſupper, three or four diſhes

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extraordinary for his friends. The nobility do not difregard him, becauſe he is not ambitious of being on a par with them. Every one in the city loves him, becauſe he does good to all; and to obtain any favour of him, there is no need to aſk it. He has diſtinguiſhed you, becauſe he knows you to be a ſtranger, which, with him, is reaſon ſufficient. This is his way of thinking; but he has a ſiſter, who is of a very different opinion: ſhe is altogether as ſordid and miſerable, as he is generous and good; ſhe had a huſband who was preſident of the parliament, and, by her ſordidneſs, ſhe broke his heart: I ſhall ſay no more in favour of that gentleman, only, that he had lined his morning gown with ſonnets, printed on ſilk, that were dedicated to his praiſe: when the preſident put on that gown, he was all philoſophy and poetry from head to foot. This diſcourſe of Madam Tavenot diverted me much, and Mr. D'Arcore came in, and caught us laughing, without knowing that his ſiſter was the cauſe of our mirth. Tea was brought in; and when we had drank it, he gave orders that nobody ſhould be admitted to him that morning, becauſe he choſe to enjoy my company alone. I do this frequently,

frequently, ſaid he, when I meet with perſons of ſpirit, as you are, with whom I can ſpend an hour agreeably. I am ſo plagued with the company of ſome people, who have nothing but the figure of a man to recommend them, that I had much rather be alone. Would you believe it, Sir, ſaid he, in a large city like this, where intereſt is the ruling principle, that luxury is ſuſtained by commerce alone? and in this there is no rule, becauſe all endeavour to be equal: I can give you but little account of our nobility, becauſe I do not keep company with them; nevertheleſs, as I know that my income is not inferior to theirs, I do not eſteem myſelf any ways beneath them, though they have old parchments with antient priviledges, which my family has not; upon this ſuperiority, that they have over me by birth, they think I am obliged to ſerve them, if they deign to command me: if they aſk me to lend them one hundred piſtoles, they think they do me a favour; and if I have courage to deny it, my refuſal becomes a crime: to have their good opinion and eſteem, I muſt keep open purſe at their command; and buy their land at their own price, if they want to ſell it: ſtanding

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out with them on a hazardous game, they eſteem you honoured by the loſs. I conſider them as charcoal, that burns or blackens; nor do I find a better way of dealing with them, than by a reſerved and complaiſant carriage towards them. To paſs away my time, I could keep company with women of quality, and divert myſelf by intrigues and gallantries; but in this there are alſo rocks: if they are married, one is liable to the extravagant jealouſy of their huſbands; if they are virgins, their chief ſubject of diſcourſe is matrimony; the commerce with certain others of that ſex, brings ſcandal, and becomes not a perſon of honour; to take a wife againſt my inclination, would be downright madneſs: therefore, to live comfortably, I live alone. I am a friend to all, but a ſlave to none; and when I find one that is of my way of thinking, I find, in ſuch company, all the happineſs I deſire. Then, Sir, ſaid I, you are either a recluſe, or a philoſopher. I am neither one nor the other, anſwered he; I live according to my own taſte, and follow my own inclinations: I hate ſubjection; and will not, on any account, commit violence on my inclinations. When noiſe and confuſion become irkſome,

ſome, I go into the country; when ſolitude is troubleſome, I return to the city: in my houſe, I enjoy the company of my friends, when I find thoſe that are agreeable; when I have not any to my mind, I ſpend a few hours, for the ſake of diverſion, at ſome coffee-houſe; and there is nothing that delights me ſo much, as the variety of characters which are there to be met with.

If you ſhould ſtay any time at Lyons, and think proper to go now and then, as I do, to that coffee-houſe where you found me, you will not envy the diverſions of the theatre, or the moſt chaerful aſſembly; for thoſe that know how to philoſophiſe on the actions of mankind, a coffee-houſe is a continual comedy. You'll there find politicians, who diſcourſe, over a diſh of Coffee, of things to come, as if they were preſent; they know all that paſſes in the cabinet; they declare war, they put armies in the field, beſieged forts they take by aſſault; they put to the ſword twenty or thirty thouſand men, without moving from the table at which they ſit: they ſettle the prices of ſtocks as they think proper: in ſhort, there is nothing which they are not acquainted with. Every new book that comes to light, is liable to their comments;

ments; nor can it escape criticism. After having made war on all the powers of Europe, they also make it among themselves, and in this alone they are unanimous; every one will obstinately maintain his point. There was in the coffee-house, the other day, an abbot without an abby, who styles himself Marquis, pretending to a be a nobleman by birth, that he is intimately acquainted with all the cardinals in Rome, and two or three of them are his relations; he refused a bishopric of four thousand pistoles per Annum: he has been every where; has read every thing: not a lady in Lyons but has courted his confidence; and he spends regularly every day, thirty pistoles in trifles. Would you think, that, with all this self-conceit, and so much parade, the wig that he wears is, at least, ten years old? he dines every day for ten-pence, and spends three-pence more daily, to stun people six hours continually with talk in a coffee-house, spreading these his dreams of grandeur.

I had a great desire to know a person of this odd character; for which reason we went immediately to the coffee-house, where we were in hopes of finding him, it being the hour he usually

uſually came at. He was juſt gone as we came in. We found there however, in his ſtead, a man of letters, who diſcredited all works that were not his own: he was diſputing upon ſome points of literature with a phyſician, not leſs extravagant than himſelf: our coming diſconcerted them, and ſent them away wrangling. Mr. D'Arcore, taking me aſide, re-aſſumed the diſcourſe. He that went away, ſeeing me ſaid he, is aſhamed, becauſe I know him: at preſent, he ſtyles himſelf phyſician; but, a few years ago, I ſaw him in Holland, when he was a quack-doctor. To hear him diſcourſe on phyſic, he knows more than Hypocrates. Among other things, the maſter of the coffee-houſe makes his ſon write down all that this quack ſays, and afterward get it by art: with this capital of erudition, he thinks of ſending him to Paris; and making him a phyſician, without the aſſiſtance of a college. It is two years, and more, that that young lad has been writing ſuch ſtuff, without learning any thing. This prime phyſician, his maſter, has fouled more paper than half the authors in Europe: as he pretends to know all things, ſo he writes on all things at a venture: he has begun a hundred

works, of which even a page has not been ſeen; but remains imperfect in his ſtudy, for the diverſion of worms and mice. He is called, Doctor Salamel: his character is not leſs ridiculous than his ſurname: he ſays, and unſays; does, and undoes; will, and will not; in the ſame moment. In all his propoſitions, you may ſee him illiterate; but, by his method of diſcourſe, you may ſee, above all, the mountebank. I have ſeen him in company with two ſiſters, between whom he ſtrutted as if he had had in his company two of the Sybils: they muſt naturally have been the miſerable produce of ſome ſtall, or, at moſt, of ſome play-houſe; but to him they are oracles, and he conſults them to all his receipts. They pretend to have, in every thing, a taſte ſuperior to all the world; but conſtantly ſtudy ſome new manner to make themſelves ridiculous. He does not exerciſe any of the ſciences which he profeſſes; becauſe, in almoſt all, he has made a very indifferent figure. He undertook the cure of two fevers, and made them become malignant: he was to draw a rotten tooth for a young lady, and, inſtead of ſo doing, drew two that were ſound. He ſtrove to diſcredit the tragedy of a man

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of ſpirit, before he had read it; which tragedy, when it appeared, had the public applauſe: nevertheleſs, he maintains the juſtice of his own opinion, and entertains a high conceit of his own judgment. If you ſtill ſpeak to him of that tragedy, and tell him that all the world finds it good; he will anſwer you, that all the world are ignorant, and that there cannot be a more wretched performance.

CHAP. IX.

The Death of Celiſtina; and News of Count Termes.

NOtwithſtanding a variety of ideas ran in my head, I heard Mr. D'Arcore with pleaſure; who would have continued his diſcourſe about the phyſician, had not one of his domeſtics brought us word that we were wanted at home, and that with all imaginable ſpeed. This meſſage was like a wound in my heart, as I was continually apprehenſive of ſome misfortune. As we went along, a thouſand thoughts came into my mind; and as my flight from Avignon was my only crime, ſo I was always in fear of being diſcovered, and puniſhed in ſome exemplary manner.

What miſtaken ideas do we form of futurity! and how naturally does guilt fix the moſt dreadful impreſſions on our mind! When we were arrived at Mr. D'Arcore's, I met with nothing of what my apprehenſions had ſuggeſted, but found myſelf plunged into the moſt cruel diſtreſs that could have happened to one in my circumſtances: my poor Celiſtina had been ſuddenly taken ill with a moſt violent cholic, and was reduced to the greateſt extremity. The diſorder had ſeized her about half an hour before we came in, and I found her without motion, out of her ſenſes, and not able to utter one word. 'Tis impoſſible to conceive with what exceſſive grief this diſmal cataſtrophe afflicted me: I threw myſelf, crying, upon the bed; I embraced her, and called her by her name; but ſhe did not anſwer! ſhe ſeemed not to hear me; nor could one perceive that ſhe was alive, only by a languid turn of the eye---a fatal ſign of the ſevere convulſions that were tearing her bowels, and haſtening her to her laſt moments! I have not heart to deſcribe, even now, either her ſituation or my own, though ſo many years have paſſed: my memory preſents to my mind that fatal day, which ſtill affects

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me with the greateſt horror. In vain did we look for ſuccour from the phyſicians. Mr. D'Arcore did every thing in his power to preſerve her life; but, at the end of two hours, my poor Celiſtina died!—

My grief for her death was ſo violent, that it was almoſt impoſſible for me to preſerve that ſecret which I had hitherto ſo cautiouſly obſerved: I abandoned myſelf to ſuch deſpair, that they dreaded the loſs of my ſenſes. As it was neceſſary to take me by force from that room, they put me into a coach and conducted me to a country-houſe of Mr. D'Arcore's, to which he himſelf accompanied me. Before I left Lyons, I recommended the care of poor Celiſtina's funeral to Madam Tavenot, and deſired her to pack up every thing that belonged to me, and to ſend them into the country, from whence I did not intend ſoon to return. When I was a little recovered from the lethargy, into which deep melancholy had thrown me, and returned, as one may ſay, into myſelf; I found myſelf in a chamber genteelly furniſhed; from the windows of which, nothing was to be ſeen but a delightful verdure: Mr. D'Arcore ſtood by me, and uſed his utmoſt endeavours

to conſole me for the loſs of ſo amiable a wife (as he indeed imagined ſhe was); his advice was that of a friend; and his maxims, thoſe of a true philoſopher: I found myſelf equally obliged by his genteel manners, and convinced by the force of his arguments: but no one knew my ſituation ſo well as myſelf. My principal object was, that not even he ſhould penetrate into the ſecrets of my heart; for which reaſon, I begged he would leave me alone for a ſhort time; adding, for an excuſe, that I found an inclination for a little ſleep: upon which he courteouſly departed, and ſent a ſervant to ſhut the windows, and the door of the chamber. I threw myſelf on an eaſy chair; not to ſleep, which, in my agitation of mind, was impoſſible, but to vent, with tears, my grief; and to ſeek, in my deplorable caſe, ſuch aſſiſtance as reaſon could beſt ſupply me with.

Short ſighted maid! ſaid I, in my heart, diſſolving myſelf in tears, that felicity is ſoon finiſhed, that thou promiſed thyſelf in flying from ſolitude: it is not a month that thou haſt enjoyed that ſo much wiſh'd for liberty, and how much trouble hath it already coſt thee! how much agitation, how much bitterneſs!

bitterneſs! thou haſt hardly touched the threſhold of the world, and thou haſt already loſt, upon this threſhold, the faithful companion of thy flight, thine only counſellor, thy ſure guide in this troubled ſea, which for thee has neither ſhore or bottom; and where every little blaſt that blows, menaces thee with certain ſhipwreck! without parents, without friends, without adviſers! an orphan, under a dreſs not her own; abandon'd, wandering, unable what to reſolve, what to think, or what to do, not to become hated of thyſelf! perhaps thou wilt ſoon die; but if thou haſt ſtill long to live, as thy youth promiſes, what will be thy lot, as thou haſt ſo little of thy own, and nothing to hope for from others? if thou purſueſt the plan thou haſt undertaken, thy honour is in danger; if thou ſhouldſt retract, and return to Avignon, thy liberty is in danger. Juſt heavens! am I to make, in this world, the unhappy figure of a baſe-born vagabond? Oh! I will voluntarily ſhut myſelf up in ſolitude; there to die forlorn! In this great and painful choice, reputation in life ought to prevail: what ſignifies life when one lives to ones ſhame? and what durable felicity can one have upon

on earth, when, to attain it, muſt plunge one into a crime? Agitated by theſe thoughts, I toſſed and turned in the chair, ſighing, crying, and ſobbing, but without reſolving on any thing.

The darkneſs of the place was ſuitable to my ſadneſs: the death of Celiſtina ſeemed to me a chaſtiſement from heaven, and which, by way of terror, called me to myſelf: it ſeemed to me, that with her were finiſhed all my hopes of happineſs; ſince I had no one to aſſiſt me in finding that felicity, which I did not hope to find without her. One idea ſucceeding another, I returned, in my thoughts, to my own retirement; but, in imagination only, I trembled with horror: I found that I could live there, if not more quietly, at leaſt more honourably; but I had not courage to return, becauſe my heart could not condemn itſelf: I would, and I would not, all in a breath; I would willingly have combined together, honour and liberty; but I did not know how: and at laſt, after many thoughts for and againſt, Mr. D'Arcore ſtruck into my mind, as though I muſt hope from him ſome relief in my difficult ſituation; or, at leaſt, ſome advice. Is it not poſſible, ſaid I to myſelf,

ſelf, that this generous friend, who is ſo kind without knowing me, when he hears the truth of my ſituation, may be touched with compaſſion: he delights in doing good for all; can he deſire a more laudable occaſion to exerciſe, in my favour, this his generous talent? what will it profit him to publiſh what I am? and what a riſk am I expoſed to, if, by preſerving in my breaſt my ſecret, I do not avail myſelf of the opportunity of his bounty? yes, let me ſpeak to him; let me throw myſelf at his feet, and lay open to him the ſecrets of my heart: he is rich, he is young; he has no wife; he depends upon none but himſelf; he diſtinguiſhes me, believing me to be a man; who knows... when he finds me a woman, when he ſees me in danger, when he knows that I am deſtitute, what honeſty, inclination, and love, may ſuggeſt to him? In the heat of theſe reflections, which flattered and pleaſed me, I got up reſolutely from the chair where I was ſitting, opening the room door, and went in ſearch of Mr. D'Arcore, to beg his aſſiſtance. Having aſked one of his ſervants where his maſter was to be met with, he told me that he was walking in the garden; I went to him with a

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firm reſolution to throw myſelf at his feet, and, with tears in my eyes, to diſcover myſelf to him, and implore his generous compaſſion. He did not ſee me when I accoſted him, becauſe he ſtood with his back to the place I came from, and was reading attentively a paper, which I did not perceive till I was near to him. Sir, I had began to ſay to him; but he, as though ſurpriſed, ſtarted, and putting the paper he had been reading into my hand, Take, ſaid he, this letter; you are juſt come opportunely to read it, and amuſe yourſelf: I received it this moment from Lyons, by the Italian extraordinary poſt; there is ſomething will make you laugh, in regard to an affair of which we will talk ſome other time. He ſaid this to divert my thoughts from the death of Celiſtina, not becauſe he apprehended that there could be any thing, in that letter, that could excite my curioſity: if he had foreſeen that the reading of it would have increaſed my melancholy, he would not have named it. At the name of Italy, my heart jumped in my breaſt; nor did I know for why; my hand trembled in taking the letter, as if it foreſaw matter of freſh concern, that it would occaſion

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me: reading it to myſelf, I found it as follows:

" Dear Sir,

A few days ago diſappeared a young Lady, who was in the retirement of Avignon, there called Miſs D'Arville: as ſhe was the cauſe of my ſudden departure for Italy; ſo, I flatter myſelf, I have been the principal occaſion of her flight. From a friend, like you, nothing ſhould be kept ſecret. I love her tenderly; and I have certain teſtimony of having it returned. You will oblige me, if you will cauſe the moſt diligent ſearch to be made in France, as I ſhall alſo purſue the ſame meaſures in Italy, if ever ſhe ſhould have gone for this part. I ſend you a billet that I preſerved of her writing, which may poſſibly be of ſervice; but cannot, at preſent, extend the advantage which might enſue, from giving you a more exact deſcription of her perſon, as I am actually obliged to keep my bed, from a ſlight wound received laſt week under Tortona. The moment I am permitted I ſhall write you more; in the mean time, I rely on your goodneſs, and am,

Devotedly,

CHAP. X.

New Trouble to my Spirit; and Motives to depart from Lyons.

IT is more eafy to be imagined than deſcribed, how I remained after reading this letter: a thouſand ideas ruſhed into my mind; of fear, of trouble, of compaſſion, and of love! The memory of the Count of Termes, ſeemed like a fire ſtifled among ruins; which took at once, in my breaſt, its former activity and vigour. In ſo long a time that I had heard no news of him, he now and then came into my mind; but this remembrance wore off gradually, and gave me neither conſolation or trouble. On ſeeing the writing, and hearing his ſentiments, it preſented him in the moſt lovely form to my eyes and ſoul; as amiable as ever I had ſeen him: I was ſorry for the diſtance he was from me: his love gave me pleaſure; his wound made me pity him: I was vexed I had not taken the direct road for Italy, to overtake him: I thought that would be the beſt ſtep I could take, which it would be eaſy for me to ſucceed in, even by myſelf; and the diſcovering myſelf to Mr. D'Arcore, would be the ſame as

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diſhonouring myſelf; and, without his aſſiſtance, I could get to Italy, and find out the Count; I was therefore determined to uſe the beſt means I was able to prevent his knowledge of my plan.

Theſe, and a thouſand other thoughts, paſſed in my mind; but my greateſt trouble was, how to conceal my confuſion from Mr. D'Arcore. Having read the letter, I returned it to him, ſmiling: he aſked me, what I thought of it? I replied, that, at the firſt time he had mentioned that affair, at the coffee-houſe, I had foretold that it was ſo; and that love was generally the firſt occaſion of ſuch adventures. I ſhould have been glad to have dropt this diſcourſe, leſt ſome involuntary change in my countenance might betray my heart; but, as he ſtill continued it, any interruption of mine might have been ſuſpected: I therefore aſked him, what he intended to do, to ſerve his friend? to which he anſwered, that he would write to all his acquaintance; but that he judged it would be to no purpoſe, becauſe, if Miſs D'Arville was a lady of ſpirit, ſhe had taken the direct road to Italy. I was very willing he ſhould think ſo, for which reaſon I choſe not to contradict him. We entered into a

a ſhady walk; and Mr. D'Arcore, who ſtudied all methods to divert me, related to me, a ſimilar ſtory of a young Engliſh lady, who had eloped from London, a few years ago, and who was known by him, at Lyons, as ſhe was going to Paris. The ſtory was long, and the circumſtances entertaining; but I took ſo little notice of what he told me, that, at preſent, I have only a confuſed idea of it: I, in the mean time, was thinking only of my own affairs, and believed myſelf ſufficiently juſtified, by my ſituation, to recede from thoſe meaſures, which, a few minutes before, I intended to have taken. I had preſented myſelf to Mr. D'Arcore, fully reſolved to acquaint him with my caſe, becauſe I thought it conſiſtent with my honour; I had hardly read the letter, but my honour ſuggeſted to me quite the contrary; and though I uſed my utmoſt endeavours to hide it from him, my love had almoſt got the better of my reaſon, and drawn from me a confeſſion of the whole. In truth, the more I ſtudied to regulate myſelf, according to the dictates of reaſon, the more I was perplexed: I was ſenſible that I loved the Count of Termes tenderly; and, pleaſed with the concern

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that he ſhewed for me, was reſolved to go ſeek for him in Italy; but, upon reflection, I ſhould have died rather than have diſcovered, to Mr. D'Arcore, the ſecret movements of my ſoul: in a word, I was weak, becauſe I was a woman; but I would not appear ſuch, becauſe my honour was at ſtake. Theſe ſtruggles in my mind aroſe from a laudable principle of virtue, by which I was convinced, that it became me to conceal my weakneſs. In this I made the fundamental maxims of my philoſophy to conſiſt; reflecting, that the antient philoſophers were no more than men, though they ſtudied to become ſuperior to the viciſſitudes of human nature. Such were my thoughts, while Mr. D'Arcore was attempting to divert me with his diſcourſe; and mentioning, accidentally, the Count of Termes, he aſked me, if, in my coming from Italy, I had not paſſed through Avignon? and, if I there had known him, or, at leaſt, heard him named? I had told Mr. D'Arcore, from the beginning of our acquaintance, that I was, by birth, an Italian, as had been agreed, between myſelf and Celiſtina, before we arrived at Lyons; and this queſtion of his was no ways unreaſonable; I frankly denied

having ever heard of ſuch a perſon, becauſe my ſituation obliged me ſo to do: but, to a ſincere friend, every lye, tho' ever ſo inſignificant, muſt coſt ſome bluſhes: to this queſtion of his, and much more to the anſwer, my face was like ſcarlet; nor could I find a better excuſe, to hide it from him, than by taking out my handkerchief, as if to wipe from my face the ſweat, occaſioned by the heat of the weather. This pretext ſeemed to ſucceed to my wiſh; and I was certain, that Mr. D'Arcore had not any ſuſpicion. In pulling out my handkerchief, ſomething ſeemed to fall out of my pocket upon the ground; but I did not regard it, having other things at heart. We had advanced a few ſteps forward, and were turning back, when Mr. D'Arcore ſtooped to take up ſomething from the ground; and, riſing, ſaid to me, Is this piece of gallantry fallen from your pocket? I was wondering at the meaning of his words, when, to my ſurprize, I ſaw, in his hand, the ſnuff-box with the Count of Termes' picture, given, by him, to me at Avignon: I knew that it was cuſtomary for me to keep it in my pocket, to prevent it from falling into any one's hands; but the accidents of that day had

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ſo much engroſſed my attention, that it might eaſily fall from my pocket without my perceiving it. I know not how it was that I did not drop down at his feet, with the confuſion of being caught in a manifeſt lye, of my ſex being diſcovered, and of being expoſed to the moſt pungent reproof. A ſimple act of of civility, pardonable in a friend, had almoſt ruined me, if Mr. D'Arcore had been induced to open that box: any other woman, in my caſe, would have given cauſe of ſuſpicion: it is true, I was much troubled; but all my trouble was internal: as to the external, I had extraordinary preſence of mind, and, with the greateſt difficulty, took the box out of his hand: looking at it, as if I had ſcarcely known it, I anſwerſwered, Yes, Sir, it is mine; but I wiſh it was not (at the ſame time puting it in my pocket) for it has coſt me many a ſigh: this induced him to believe that the inſide contained the picture of ſome favourite young lady of my acquaintance, and prevented him from opening it; by which means he would have found that of Count Termes. I could not avoid anſwering ſeveral queſtions which he put to me on this head; but I brought myſelf off very well.

Among other things, bantering me upon the cruelty of my ſuppoſed miſtreſs, he deſired, as a favour, to ſee the picture, that he might be ſatisfied whether ſhe merited my love. I did not keep him long in ſuſpence; but opened the box in ſuch a manner, that he could only ſee the picture of Miſs Termes, while that of the Count, her brother, remained hid. The box was made in ſuch manner, that only one at a time could be ſeen, which was owing to the particular method of opening it. Mr. D'Arcore was fully ſatisfied at my readineſs to oblige him, nor did he ſuſpect the leaſt deceit. Nevertheleſs I thought myſelf in continual danger, ſhould I remain much longer with him; therefore at the expiration of a few days, during which time nothing worth mentioning occurred, I, at laſt, without diſguſting him, got leave to depart, with pretence, that I had ſome concerns that obliged me to be at Paris. My thoughts were really turned towards Italy; but it was highly neceſſary to conceal my real Intentions. Being about bargaining with my friend for a horſe, as abovementioned, I deſired to know the price; but he obliged me to accept him, with a ſmall eaſy chair, under which he uſed

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to harneſs him for travelling the country; and added, that we would agree about the price when I came back. Before I ſet out, he ordered a large trunk, with my cloaths, to be faſtened behind the chaiſe; then handed me into it, and put the reins into my hand, telling me, that the road to Paris was ſtraight forward, and to let the horſe go of himſelf: he deſired me to remember him, and to return ſoon, according to my promiſe. The laſt farewel coſt us both ſome tears; and when we parted, he looked after me till I was out of ſight; nor did I know how neceſſary his preſence was to me, till I found myſelf far off.

CHAP. XI.

My firſt Acquaintance with Mr. Duli; and an Account of his Adventures.

IT is impoſſible for any one to conceive the perplexing circumſtances which attended me on this journey: I ſaw myſelf alone, on a road that I had never been on before, with a whip and reins in my hand, and a high-mettled horſe which required judgment to manage him properly. The road was ſtraight

ſtraight and good, but I feared much that it would not continue ſo all the way; I frequently met with other carriages, the avoiding and giving place to which was ſuch a trouble to me, that it made me tremble through fear of breaking my neck: the horſe, without being whipped, went on with vigour; but I ſhould have been glad he had not gone ſo faſt, the better to be able to manage him at my pleaſure. The only conſolation I had in finding myſelf alone, was, to be able to think on my circumſtances as much as I pleaſed. I knew that I was in the road to Paris, and deſired to be in that to Italy; but how to return back, without paſſing by Lyons and Mr. D'Arcore's country-ſeat, I could not tell; and being ſeen again by him, I muſt appear, in his eyes, either an impoſtor or a lyar. To maintain a character that was not real, I was obliged to act contrary to my own inclinations; for a compliment to ſo courteous a friend, I prolonged the time of ſeeing a tender lover, with whom I could have changed my condition, and avoided the many troubles which I ſhould be obliged to ſuffer by living ſo many years at a diſtance from him. However I advanced towards Paris, in hopes that I ſhould

ſhould have found, upon the road, ſome opportunity of forwarding my intended journey to Italy. Beſides the danger I was expoſed to, as a woman, being alone, a fugitive, and a wanderer; it was needful that I ſhould think of travelling with the greateſt œconomy, not knowing what might happen to me; and that I ought always prudently to provide againſt all accidents. Travelling on, accompanied with ſuch thoughts, I found myſelf, towards night, in a large village between Lyons and Maſcon, ten leagues diſtance from where I departed in the morning. Here I ſaw, upon the left hand, the ſign of the white horſe, which ſeemed, by the outward appearance, to be a pretty good inn; I ſtopped at the door, and a ſervant came to me, who took hold of the bridle of the horſe, and led him into the yard. After I alighted, I went to ſee the horſe taken to the ſtable and fed, in order to make myſelf converſant in many things that I then was unacquainted with, that I might be leſs puzzl d how to act hereafter. When the horſe was rubb'd down, and the chaiſe put up, I ordered the waiter to carry my portmanteau into my room. Paſſing through a lodge, I obſerved a perſon whoſe

whoſe appearance pleaſed me much; I enquired of the maid, if there was any gentleman in the houſe that would ſup, and ſpend the evening with me? ſhe informed me, that there was no one but that merchant whom I had ſeen in paſſing; but that he was an honeſt man, well known at that inn, and that my company would be very agreeable to him. I ſent my compliments to him, deſiring the favour of his company to ſupper; which he returned with great civility, and informed me, by the ſervant, that he would wait upon me immediately; he accordingly was with me in a few minutes. When ſupper was brought in, we ſate down, and eat with a hearty appetite. This gentleman came from Paris, and was called Duli; at every two mouthfuls, he drank a large glaſs of the beſt wine that the inn afforded; he was either naturally very talkative, or the wine had made him ſo; for without my aſking him, he began to inform me of his own private concerns, as if I had known him many years: he told me, he had a wife and nine children, but that he had ſeen none of them for ſeveral years; and that, perhaps, he ſhould never ſee them more. This excited my curioſity to aſk

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him the reaſon; and he readily proceeded as follows:

I am, ſaid he, by birth, an Italian, and traded in timber, in company with a friend of mine, a rich merchant of my own country. Going together, from Venice to Leghorn, about our own buſineſs, with a large ſum of twenty-five thouſand livres, which we were to diſburſe for a correſpondent of ours, it happened, that we remembered we had ſome affairs to tranſact upon the road, for which my partner was obliged to return back: I, therefore, went to Leghorn alone, with the ſum of money that I was to diſburſe; and my firſt concern was to find my correſpondent, in order to give it to him; but, unfortunately for me, he was out of town, and was not to return for ſeveral days. I don't know what malignant planet had the aſcendant over my mind at that time; I was in a capacity to maintain my family honourably; my profits were conſiderable; and, in my own country, I had the character of a man of honour. My wife was alſo very amiable, and I tenderly loved my children. Notwithſtanding this, a thought came into my mind, that ſtrikes me with horror at the remembrance; and this hurried me into

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one of the moſt extravagant reſolutions in the world. Seeing myſelf maſter of the twenty-five thouſand livres, a frolic came into my head, to go and trade in the Indies; hoping there to make an immenſe fortune. I found, in the port, a veſſel ready to ſet ſail for Holland; I embarked in her, and went to Oſtend; and from thence, on board of a Dutchman, I ſet ſail for Batavia. Imagine what were the thoughts of my correſpondents and family, at not hearing any news of me: they concluded, I had been aſſaſſinated on the journey. My creditors reduced my family to the moſt extreme diſtreſs; and my poor wife gave herſelf up to the moſt deplorable melancholy. While they were lamenting my ſuppoſed death in Italy, I was trading in the Indies, racked with the ſevereſt ſtings of conſcience; and the fatal conſequences of this voyage, began already to denounce vengeance againſt me. Since I had deſtroyed the fortunes of thoſe moſt dear to me, I ſhould, at leaſt, have made my own; but this did not happen, becauſe my own conſcience was my greateſt enemy. Agitated continually by internal remorſe for my crime, I had not reſolution to take proper care of any thing, that

that could redound to my advantage. I was no ſooner got to the Indies, than I looked for an opportunity to return to Europe. I was no ſooner returned, than I found myſelf aſhamed to reviſit my afflicted family, to appeaſe their grief, and ſonſole them at leaſt with a certainty of my being alive: the action I had been guilty of gave me great trouble, and I was afraid of being ſeen by my creditors: the money, that I had taken with me in my flight, was greatly diminiſhed; nor was there enough left to heal the old wound, much leſs to remedy the future wants. The beſt that I could do, in ſuch a ſituation, not to be be reduced to extreme miſery, was to begin to trade in Holland with the little I had left. Immediately upon my return from Batavia, I changed my name, and borrowed that by which you have heard me called in this houſe. I bought ſome merchandize of all ſorts, and loading them upon a horſe, carried about with me my ſhop of goods. With this I go from city to city, and from town to town, to get a livelyhood; nor ſhould I be diſcontented with this manner of life, if, now and then, the thoughts of my family did not awaken the torment of my mind. I am confidant to the private

concerns of a certain great Princeſs at Paris; and have thoughts of throwing myſelf at her feet, that ſhe may employ her intereſt to reſtore me, without danger, to my family and country. When ſhe was at Rome, about eighteen years ago, ſhe lodged in my houſe, and was there brought to bed of a daughter; of which I ſhall ſay nothing more, only, that there was need of my ſecreſy. She is under obligations to help me; but when I was at Paris I had not courage to preſent myſelf to her: thus I went, more deſirous than ever, to ſee my family once more; and through my baſhfulneſs, in not applying to that Princeſs, was obliged to withdraw myſelf, and leave them in the falſe opinion that I am no more amongſt the living. In this manner Duli diſcourſed, partly in Italian and partly in French, according as the wine operated. This ſhort and confuſed account had made me curious of a thouſand little things by him done and mentioned; but though he would talk about himſelf and family, for hours together, of his own accord, he did not ſeem inclineable to anſwer my queſtions; and I found that I was to take what he gave me, without looking for more. When we were riſen from table, he inſiſted

ſiſted upon ſhewing me his goods; from which I ſhould find, that he had made conſiderable advantage by trading, in his portable ſhop. Among other things, in opening a little caſe where he had ſome jewels of value, he ſhewed me the picture of a lady, ſet round with brilliants, which attracted my eye; and my curioſity led me to aſk who was the original? This is, ſays he, the picture of the princeſs, whom I mentioned a while ago, who, before I was married, and my mother ſtill living, lodged almoſt two months ſecretly in my houſe, and there lay in of a daughter, without a word of it being known in Rome, and which I never mentioned to any body except yourſelf; ſo ſaying, he took the picture haſtily out of my hand, and locked it up again in the box, aſking me, if I would not buy ſome of his goods? As my poor Celiſtina had provided, at Lyons, ſeveral ſorts of merchandize to ſell, which now were only an incumbrance to me, I told him, that I was rather induced to ſell than to buy; and that if he would give me what they coſt me, I would ſell him a good bargain of ſome fine ſtuffs which I had bought. He gladly accepted the offer, and we went into my room; where, upon ſee-

ing the goods, he was very well contented, paid down the money, and retired to go to bed.

CHAP. XII.

A Preſent made me by Mr. D'Arcore; with a Letter from him, which confuſed me much.

IN turning over my portmanteau, I was much ſurpriſed at finding a ſmall caſe, which I had not taken notice of before: in preſence of Duli, I did not ſhow my ſurprize, but, when he was gone, I opened it with impatience; and I found, to my great aſtoniſhment, a gold ſnuff-box, a diamond ring, a ſilk purſe with one hundred Louiſdores, and a letter from Mr. D'Arcore, which was as follows:

" Dear Friend,

I take the liberty, in this manner, with the ſincerity of my heart, to preſent you with a few trifles which you will find here annexed when you are far from me, and which, I am certain, in perſon you would have refuſed. I uſe this reſerve with you, becauſe I have ſtrong motives to believe that you have not been fully ſincere with me. Perhaps I have

I have not merited your confidence; nevertheleſs, I ſhall ever eſteem you: and certainly my diſcretion will merit your gratitude.

I am, &c.

D'ARCORE.

I do not know whether I was more diſturbed at the generoſity of this worthy gentleman, or ſurpriſed at the clear notice that he gave me of knowing me to be the lover of Count Termes, or, at leaſt, that he did not believe me to be what I had told him.

This letter was like a clap of thunder; it ſtruck me motionleſs and precipitated me into an abyſs of confuſion. Thoſe rich gifts, though they made a conſiderable addition to my little ſtock, gave me no pleaſure, becauſe they ſeemed like ſo many reproofs for my ingratitude. My greateſt conſolation always had been, that of believing that no one was privy to my affairs; and in flattering myſelf, that nobody could have known me for a woman, if I did not diſcover it myſelf: by Mr. D'Arcore's letter I was robbed even of that comfort; and though he ſeemed diſcreet enough not to convince me that he had diſcovered my true ſtate, yet I

was uneasy through fear of being convinced by some other person. The letter from Mr. D'Arcore might have been interpreted in a very different light; but those that are conscious of any fault, always fear the worst. The accusation laid against me being so dubious, I thought immediately of some reply to justify myself; but it was difficult to find a remedy that was not worse than the disease: I was resolved not to confess the truth, because I had already gone too far to recede; and, as my reputation was at stake, I could not think upon a better remedy than to interpret his complaint in a different sense, and to justify myself by pretending not to understand him.

After many reflections, I conceived in my thoughts a letter, in answer, that seemed quite apropó; and I resolved to leave the letter at the inn, that it might be sent to Lyons by the first opportunity. I had scarce began to write, when fortunately I recollected, that Mr. D'Arcore had in his hands a letter of mine, sent him by Count Termes, enclosed in that letter he had shewn me in the garden. Poor me! exclaimed I, trembling, what shall I do? I shall be condemn'd by my own hand writing; and

and who knows but this is the net that Mr. D'Arcore has ſpread on purpoſe to confront the letters together, and, from the uniformity of the characters, to find out the truth of what he has, perhaps, at preſent, only a ſlight ſuſpicion? Thus was I in a worſe dilemma than before, from which I could find no way to extricate myſelf. Gratitude, civility, and the deſire that I had of juſtifying myſelf, required, by all means, that I ſhould anſwer that letter, and contradict the accuſation. The neceſſity I was under not to betray myſelf, forbade my writing it with my own hand. By the hard alternative of being ungrateful to the perſon who had been ſo kind to me, or of being cruel to myſelf, there was no method but to anſwer Mr. D'Arcore, in a civil and prudent manner, by ſome other hand. The more I thought of this ſcheme, the better I approved of it: his receiving a letter of mine, without knowing it for another hand, and finding that it was not uniform with the characters of the other letter, would, at leaſt, confuſe him in his firſt ſuſpicions. Without appearing to underſtand his complaint, I juſtified myſelf ſufficiently; whereas the putting myſelf upon the negative,

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or not giving him any anſwer at all, would certainly make him ſtill more ſuſpicious. All the difficulty conſiſted in finding a perſon to write the letter in my ſtead, and not give cauſe of ſuſpicion to the writer of it. As I was afraid of every ſhadow, ſo I was cautious that all my actions ſhould be natural, ſimple, and plain, that they might bear the niceſt ſcrutiny. After many contrivances, one occurred to me that ſeemed more natural than the reſt: with the point of a pen-knife I ſlightly cut my right thumb, and then called for ſomebody to come up. Duli was not yet in bed, but was making up his accounts relative to his buſineſs: he was the firſt that came into my room; and ſeeing my hand bloody, aſked, what was the matter? I anſwered him, that I had cut myſelf ſlightly in mending a pen; but that the cutting my thumb did not trouble me much as the not being able to anſwer a letter, of great importance to me, which I intended to diſpatch the next morning to Lyons: ſo ſaying, I put a ſilk handkerchief about my hand, to keep up the credit of my wound; and he, without deſiring to ſee it, anſwered me, that, as there was no harm done, he would be my ſecretary, and

write

write the letter. This was juſt what I wanted; I accepted the offer with a thouſand thanks, and dictated the letter in the manner I propoſed, deſiring him to take me a copy of it to keep for my ſatisfaction, as I uſed to do on every occaſion: this being done, we retired to ſleep. At break of day Duli was ready for his journey, and waked me to take his leave; I alſo got up ſoon after, and called the landlord to ſettle my expences: in that moment the courier paſſed by that was going to Lyons, and I gave him the letter directed to Mr. D'Arcore, deſiring him to deliver it immediately on his arrival. While he was refreſhing his horſes, he informed me which was the moſt eaſy and leaſt expenſive method for me to take in my journey to Italy, to which place my heart was turned; but I learnt by him, that on the road to Paris I ſhould not find any opportunity to go ſuch a journey; and that at Paris I need not fear ſucceeding, as there are always people going to Italy, either by ſea or land, with whom I could eaſily get there. I was then under the neceſſity of going to Paris: that metropolis excited my curioſity; and being provided with a horſe and chaiſe of my own, I did not think

think I was so unprovided of cash, but that I should be able to spend part for my diversion. The liberty which I assumed, under the character of a man, delighted me so much, that I was really unhappy at not being such, that I might be able to enjoy it without danger. Thus did I fix a resolution to proceed to Paris, and there take, if necessary, new measures. My chaise was soon made ready, and the guiding it did not seem so strange to me as at first; so, without thinking of any thing else, I proceeded on my way. About twelve o'clock, on the third day, I arrived at Dijon; and having resolved not to proceed any further that day, I ordered dinner to be got ready, while I went to view that fine city. Being in the market-place, every body looked after me, and I judged that, by this, they took me to be a woman: to be certain whether it was so or not, I stopped at a gun-smith's shop, to look at some fire-arms of a curious neat make; the shopkeeper, seeing me stop, asked me, if I would buy a pair of pistols mounted with silver, of very fine workmanship? As I travelled alone, I thought them a necessary accoutrement; but what, above all, induced me to buy

buy them, was the thought of impoſing on thoſe that had obſerved me, and making them believe me to be a man. If they ſhould have the leaſt doubt. I contracted for the price, which was five Louisd'ores, and deſired that they might be tried in my preſence; not ſo much becauſe I doubted, or that I could be able to decide their goodneſs, as to learn how they were loaded, and how to avail myſelf of them, in caſe of need. I did not want either ſpirit or courage; but I wanted experience of the world, and this I was endeavouring to procure. The gun-ſmith loaded the piſtols and fired them off; I did the ſame, and fireed them off a ſecond time without fear, being not a little proud of my heroiſm: I then ordered the gun-ſmith to load them with ball; which being done, I put them into my pocket, and went away very well pleaſed with the feigned perſonage I had repreſented with ſo much valour: in fact, I was deceived in my conjectures; for I was ſoon informed, that the people obſerved me with ſo much attention, becauſe they took me for one of the comedians that opened the theatre there the preceding night, and who had gained ſome applauſe by their comedy. On my return to the inn, I ſtopped at a book-

ſeller's ſhop, and bought the Gazette; and when I got home to my room, ſate down to read it. Under the date of Avignon, they ſtill continued to mention my flight; the Jew, who ſold the cloaths to Celiſtina, had been put in priſon; but they had afterwards releaſed him, not having been able to gain any intelligence. Now am I in freſh trouble, for fear of being followed and taken: I had not finiſhed reading it, when in comes a poſtilion with a poſt-chaiſe, and behind it four perſons on horſeback, that ſerved as a guard.

My heart beat with fear that they were people who came after me; but that was over in a moment, ſeeing a comely gentleman get out of the chaiſe, to whom all the others made a low bow, as if to a perſon of diſtinction. When he arrived, he aſked, if there was any company in the inn? and was anſwered, that there was a young gentleman arrived that morning. This notice obliged me to take courage, and go in perſon to pay him my compliments; he received me courteouſly, aſking me, if I had dined? and anſwering him, that I had not; he ſaid, then we will dine together.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

New Adventures at Dijon.

IT is here neceſſary to obſerve, that in France it is the cuſtom, among travellers, to make every one a confidant of their own affairs; or that I always met with people who were fond of talking much: I was very backward in ſpeaking of myſelf; but the foreigner above-mentioned, without my deſiring him, told me, that he was Don Gennaro Coranni, agent to the Neapolitan Prince, who was going to Paris by ſea; but that he had diſpatched him, by land, to prepare a houſe for him. Being ſurpriſed at the train and equipage he travelled with, I confeſſed, that I ſhould have taken him for a prince. No, replied he, a am only a ſervant; but as my maſter loves œconomy in every thing, ſo, not to prejudice his character, I, in my travelling, am fond of ſpending largely, to do him the more honour. This maxim ſeemed extraordinary; but it was not my place to find fault with it. In the mean time dinner was brought; and, during dinner, to make the better appearance, I aſked him, where he had left the allied army?

he told me, he had left them incamped near Milan; but that he knew little about them, having such an hatred to war that he could not bear to hear it talked of. He asked me, if I was also going to Paris? To prevent being obliged to travel with him, I answered, that I was returning from thence. I am sorry for it, said he, as I would very willingly have taken you post in my chaise, to keep me company: your person and conversation are such, that I like you as well as the finest woman I ever paid my addresses to; and I have, in my time, courted several very handsome ladies. If you are travelling for your diversion only, you may as well return with me to Paris, I will carry you at the expence of my master; and, at his expence, I will take you with me, at my return, to Italy; and you will not have reason to think my company disagreeable. An opportunity more favourable to my design, could not have offered; but his saying that he had taken so great a liking to me, was sufficient to make me refuse it. I returned him a great many thanks for his kind offer; but pretended to have some affairs in hand, that did not permit me to accept it. My love and interest made

made this refusal very disagreeable to me; but my honour, and character, required it. And these were always the rules of my conduct. Though so fine an opportunity to go to Italy I might, perhaps, never find again; it grieved me to let it slip: but my sex, and circumstances, obliged me not to be intimately acquainted with any one.

When Don Gennaro had dined, he departed. I had fixed my departure for the next morning; and to pass away the evening, I recollected that there was to be a comedy performed that night, and resolved to go to see it. This was the first time I ever put my foot in a theatre; of which I had no other notion than what I had got by reading. So many objects, that I had never seen, delighted me; but I was soon tired of remaining a simple spectator of what was doing, and wanted to get behind the scenes to acquire a farther knowledge. On my going to the entry that led to the stage, I found a young fellow waiting there for admission, who attended the company in quality of hair-dresser; he bowed, and let me enter first; then asked me, if I was looking for any body there? having told him I wanted nothing, but to know more particular-

ly the actors that were so highly applauded; Heavens preserve you! Sir, cried he, don't covet to be acquainted with people of this stamp; I do not speak of the profession in general, but from this company, in particular, keep yourself as far off as possible; as Gil Blas says, in his adventures, "Keep yourself far from the seven mortal sins." He observing that his discourse gave me pleasure, went on, cursing his bad fortune that he had embarked in the troop from which he got his maintenance; if you desire to form a proper idea of it, added he, I will give it you, Sir, in four words. This company, what is it? it is composed of ten people, every one of a different country, and every one the vilest dregs of those countries: imagine, from such a society of vagabonds, what good can be gained; impiety, fraud, imposture, and scheming, are the soul of this body; they caress, for hatred; prosecute, for love; at one time are like brothers, at another sworn enemies; ever ignorant, ever presumptious, ever slanderous and lyars: the person you see there is called Tartar, he acts the part of a merry-andrew, and is a rascal that will stick at no villainy, provided he can execute it to his interest:

intereſt: the other is Madam Tartar, his ſiſter, who thinks herſelf the moſt accompliſhed actreſs in the world: if you are diſpoſed to laugh, I will help you to a ſight of Madam Palandra, who is fifty years of age, and will not act any other part than than that of a young blooming girl: and you will ſee, at the ſame time, Madam Papone, who reckons, among her admirers, the emperor of China. So ſaying, he took me into a room contiguous to the ſcenes, at the door of which my conductor was ſtopped by one who ſtormed at him moſt outrageouſly, becauſe he had not curled his tupee.

I ventured a little farther into the room, and the young man I met at the door ſoon found me out. As he had juſt before left a mighty important perſon, who was declaiming againſt the neglect of the actors in their duty, becauſe they had left the ſtage four or five minutes, I aſked him who that perſon was? By the haughtineſs of his carriage, and the lofty airs of commanding and threatening, I imagined he was the head of the company, or the maſter of the theatre. Not at all, Sir, ſaid he, he has no other employ than to ſtand at the door; but, as he enjoys the protection of

the head of this company, every thing he does is right, and every body trembles at his appearance: I knew him at, Paris when he had ten ſols a night at the King's theatre, and was ſo very miſerable, that he was really the picture of hunger itſelf: at preſent he is very little better; but as he is like a great bladder, ſo he ſwells with wind; and, important as he ſeems to be, he is nothing but voice. My conductor, finding that I was deſirous of going, and knowing me to be a ſtranger, offered to accompany me home; and as it was late in the evening, and I knew but little of the ſtreets, I accepted his offer. On the way, he diverted me with the characters of all the people who compoſed that company, which was the moſt eſteemed in France; he knew their extraction, lives, and tranſactions, as well as if he had been at their birth, or had wrote their hiſtory.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

My first Acquaintance, at Troyes, with the Duke of * * * *.

THE next morning I departed from Dijon, and, after three days travelling, in which nothing worthy of notice occurred, I arrived at Troyes, and put up at the bell inn, at which place the Duke of * * * * had arrived a few minutes before me. His servants were then carrying his baggage up stairs, and he was wishing some gentleman might come in to bear him company: as soon as they saw me, they went in to let him know, that a young gentleman, of genteel appearance, was arrived, who might probably be agreeable to him: he directly sent his gentleman to invite me to supper with him. This affability, in a person of his character, surprised me: I had heard him named, several times, as one well respected at court; but I never imagined I should have received such an honour from him. The appearing as a man in the world, delighted me more than ever: since it procures me all these advantages, said I, I am resolved to see how this courteous invitation will finish.

On

On my way to his chamber, I ſtudied how to preſent myſelf before him in ſuch a manner as ſhould merit his favour. At my entring the door, facing which he was ſitting, Is it true, ſaid I, that your Grace ſent for me to ſup with you? If it was not true, ſaid he, laughing, I ſhould not have ſent to tell you ſo. Before doing me ſuch an honour, added I, your Excellency ſhould have given me ſome occaſion to merit it. Put the Excellency away, replied he; I do not love ceremony when at court, much leſs in private company: ſit here: who are you? from whence do you you come? where are you going? My name, ſaid I, is Henry Richard; I come from Lyons; and am going to Paris. Very well, added the Duke, that I like; a few words, and ſignificant: in the ſame preciſe manner I ſhould alſo have anſwered the King. Supper being brought, I would have placed myſelf on his left hand; but, No, no, ſaid he, ſit facing of me, that I may not be at the trouble of turning my head to look at you. I obeyed without any apologies. The table was laid with the greateſt magnificence, as it was cuſtomary for him to carry with him, in travelling, his own plate. At the

the firſt mouthful that he eat, he cried, Long live my cook; I know very well what I do, by taking him along with me always; he is capable of making me live well, if I was even in the deſarts of Arabia. Two footmen continually attended at his elbow; the one poured out water, the other wine, but the latter was chiefly employed. Every time that he drank, they alſo preſented it to me; my ſtomach could not ſtand this deluge; I took more water than wine, and did but wet my lips. The Duke, perceiving it, ſaid, You drink like a girl. I was red with the ſhame of being really ſuch. But do not bluſh, added he, drink plentifully, and help yourſelf as you pleaſe; I love every body ſhould have their liberty. When the deſſert was put on the table; he preſſed me to talk, and tell him ſome ſtory. This was a thing at which I felt great repugnance, but however I did not loſe my courage; I gave him an account of myſelf, telling him, I was the ſon of a very good family, that my father had left me very little to depend on; that I had put together what little money I had, to go to Paris, and there to try my fortune. The Duke then aſked me, if no love adventures had

had happened to me? becauſe my perſon made him imagine that I had made, e're this, many conqueſts. To pleaſe him, and colour my deceit, I judged it neceſſary to try my invention; and told him, as if it had happened to me, a ſtory which I had heard from Count Termes ſome time ago. Some months paſt, ſaid I, being at Leghorn, I lodged in the houſe of an old lady, who was very ugly, and who had fallen deſperately in love with me. It did not ſignify my pretending not to underſtand her. Early one morning I went into her bed-chamber, to let her know I ſhould not dine at home that day; ſhe was ſtill in bed, and, with the excuſe of aſking me for a pinch of rappee, ſhe caught me faſt by the hand, and began to declare her paſſion for me, in ſuch a manner, that I found myſelf at a loſs how to anſwer her. I excuſed myſelf a long time, in the civileſt manner I could; but this not ſucceeding, I thought beſt to free myſelf at once, by confeſſing, I could not poſſibly find in my heart to love her, being already prepoſſeſſed in favour of another. There required nothing more, to add jealouſy to love; ſhe gave way to the moſt horrible revenge, and even threatened me, that,

if

if I did not resolve immediately on a return of her love, she would call her husband, and, in his presence, would accuse me of going to use violence with her. The threat struck me with horror, when I reflected on the danger I was exposed to, from the resentment of an old jealous husband. Finding her thus determined, I had recourse to deceit; I pretended, by little and little, to comply with her desires; and, as if I had been suddenly taken with a fit, desired her to order a little water to be brought me. The good old woman believed it, and called the maid, who brought the water. I drank it against my will, and, before the maid departed, saluted the mistress with the greatest civility in the world, and went away, without her being able to make any complaint. Well done, says the Duke, give us drink, that water deserves to be celebrated with a glass of wine. I was obliged to drink a glass for company. He praised my presence of mind, that I had withdrawn myself, by that pretence, from an accusation which, by the appearance of the maid, had no more force. He asked me, how I came off afterwards? I answered him, that I contented myself with the loss of some

of my baggage not to ſee her more, but embarked for Marſeilles on my return to France. I never made a more agreeable journey than this, added I, there being, in the veſſel, two very handſome laſſes, who merited all my attention to gain their hearts. I could not ſucceed to get them alone, as the captain of the veſſel, to whom they were recommended, never let them be out of his ſight. However, I continued to ſerve them with an incredible attention; contenting myſelf, that my eyes ſhould ſpeak to them in my favour. Notwithſtanding all this, I thought myſelf certain of a conqueſt; and imagined I touched heaven with my finger, when I arrived at kiſſing their hands. The day that we dropped anchor before Marſeilles, I aſked one of them, in ſecret, where they were going to lodge? who anſwered, that ſhe did not know, but that they were both ſingers. Very good! ſaid the Duke, you was fallen into good hands; but let us drink a glaſs of Burgundy to their health, and let me hear if you behaved with them like a man of ſpirit. Before they left the ſhip, continued I, my adventurers gave me a paper, in which they inform'd me where their lodging was to be. The next day,

day, towards evening, I went to pay them a visit, and ordered a handsome supper to be brought there. I staid with them till the night was far advanced; and when I was about to go away, they begged of me to return the next morning betimes, because they had a favour to beg of me. I immediately foresaw what it would be, but made myself ignorant, desiring them to speak freely what they wanted, and that they should be served to the utmost of my power: in a word, the captain of the vessel wanted to be paid their passage, and they had not a farthing to pay him. Why did not you tell meof this on board the ship? said I, and I would have made him note the payment to the account of the subjection in which he held you, and the liberty he took to deprive me of your favours: enough said; we'll see each other to-morrow. With this I went away, nor did they see me more.

The Duke extolled to the skies my method of proceeding, in not suffering myself to be imposed upon by people of that sort; and he also drew their characters in his manner, little different from the account given me by the hair-dresser of the comedians at Dijon.

Hence it was, that I then conceived such an aversion to players, as if my heart foretold that some misfortunes would happen to me through their means. On his getting up from table to go to bed, the Duke protested he had conceived an esteem for my person. If I can serve you in any thing, said he, command me; in me you will find something more than words: as you will pass by Fontainbleau, you will do me a pleasure by coming to see me: it is now time to go to bed. So wishing me a good night, he retired.

CHAP. XV.

My Arrival at Fontainbleau, and afterwards at Paris.

I Had been told, by many, that the Duke of **** was of an obliging disposition, and very well received at court; but I never had the vanity to think, that fortune would place me on so good a footing with him. Since my flight from Avignon, I did not go to bed so contented and easy as that night, after I had supped with him. Promising myself great advantage, at Paris, by his protection; I almost rejoiced in my boldness, that had encouraged me to

make

make a ſtep ſuperior to my ſex and condition. Poor women! ſaid I, to myſelf, you are condemned to be unhappy; if conſtrained to live between the domeſtic walls, you cannot exert yourſelves in ſearch of a fortune which is not to be found eaſily, but by thoſe that ſeek for it. By the force of ſuch reflections, I began to think ſo diſadvantageouſly of my own ſex, that it made me pity them. As I kept company with the men, my actions and thoughts acquired, every day, more virility; and I became leſs timorous, more engaging, and more free. The Duke, my protector, as I ſhall hereafter call him, departed the next morning on his journey. I was up betimes, to take my leave of him before he departed; and he ſeemed to approve highly of my diligence: he renewed his aſſurances of favour, which he had made me the night before with ſo much affection. I accompanied and ſerved him till the moment that he entered his coach, and prepared to ſet out ſoon after him. He rode poſt, and arrived at Fontainbleau that evening. I, who was not in haſte, did not arrive there till the next day. My firſt care was to dreſs myſelf in the beſt manner I could, in a ſuit that was made

for me at Lyons, and to go directly to the Duke's palace, to pay him a visit: but here I was disappointed; for as soon as he had paid his compliments to the King, he set out post for Paris. I staid some time at Fontainbleau, to admire the beauties of that royal abode; and, after three days, returned to the Duke's palace to gain some intelligence of him. His servants told me, that he was not yet returned, nor did they know when he would; and I, not knowing what to do there without him, got again into my chaise, and took the road to Paris. I spent two days in travelling eighteen leagues, though I could have done it in one; but the objects I met on the way were worthy of observation, and employed a considerable part of my time. I never saw a more delightful road; on each side, superb palaces and pleasant gardens, and intermixt with flowers and ever-greens, presented themselves to my view: an immense number of people on the road, going and coming, on horseback, on foot, and in coaches, with the most magnificent equipages, gave additional grandeur to the prospect: in one place, I met the train of a prince; in another, the coach of a princess; sometimes a company

company of the King's horſe-guard, and ſometimes a batallion of French guards; all new objects to me; but ſuch as gave me incredible delight. From Fontainbleau, I travelled on till I came within ſight of Paris; beholding, as far as my eyes could diſcern, nothing but towns, cupulos, ſpires, and other high edifices. I thought I ſaw, in that city alone, all the world. When I had paſſed the ſuburbs, and had got a little way into the ſtreets of Paris, I found it a very difficult matter to get to the inn which had been recommended to me, called the Flander's Lodge, at St. Michael's bridge. I was, more than once, in danger of being overturned, and of leaving my chaiſe broken in the ſtreets; while I was avoiding one coach before me, another was threatening me behind; and to clear myſelf of thoſe on the right hand, I ran againſt thoſe on my left; till it pleaſed heaven, I arrived ſafe and found at the Flanders' Lodge, where I found ſeveral officers recruiting, but had no connection with any. In the mean time I informed myſelf where the Duke, my protector, lived; and I was told, that his palace was not far off. After I had dreſſed myſelf in my habit of ceremony, I

waited upon him, and, luckily for me, he was ſtill in Paris. When he ſaw me, he embraced me kindly, and I found him more courteous than ever; whether it was becauſe his partiality to me was increaſing, or whether the dreſs, in which I preſented myſelf, merited this greater regard, I cannot tell: I was dreſſed in a proper manner to appear at court; my coat was a rich ſilk of a dark ground, embroidered with ſmall ſilver flowers; my waiſtcoat was a ſky blue, embroidered in the ſame taſte; I had a ſhirt, with lace ruffles, very fine; and my hair was dreſſed, and tied looſe, hanging in ringlets on my ſhoulders, and ſo long that it reached to the bottom of my back; I wore a very fine hat, with a white feather, which gave more than ordinary majeſty to my ſtature; the ſword, which I wore by my ſide, was ſilver hilted, and gilt; and a ſword knot with deep red and gold flowers: upon the whole, I found that the Duke, having noticed me from head to foot, obſerved me with pleaſure, and thought me worthy of his diſtinction. What did you think of me, ſaid he, when you did not find me at Fontainbleau? if you had put off coming till to-morrow, I ſhould have been upon the

the return there, while you was seeking me at Paris: who knows but that you imagined it was all done on purpose not to let you find me? I assured him, that I should willingly have gone ten times as far, to have had the honour of seeing him. You look, said he, like a bride going to her husband; and I will certainly take you with me to Fontainbleau, to revenge myself on some of the ladies at court, that are insensible of my addresses. I told him, laughing, that I would do myself the honour of going with him wherever he pleased.

We set out from Paris in his coach, together with his secretary, and took, on a full trot, the road to Fontainbleau. To pass away my time in travelling, he asked me, if, on my coming from Marseilles, I had passed through Cavillon? to which I answered, that I had, as it was only twelve leagues distant. They are eternally long, replied he: At Cavillon I diverted myself, very agreeably, with Madam Silisti; I never saw a woman of better behaviour, or more compleat in the art of pleasing; I really believe she has made more conquests than Cleopatra did; did you know her? No, Sir, answered I, as I only passed through that place; but I have heard the

the Marquis of Maſſan ſpeak of her, who lodged at the Little Louvre; he is an amiable gentleman, but his company is a little dangerous to the fair ſex. That is very true, replied the Duke; I know that he paid his addreſſes to three young ladies all at the ſame time, and ſpent an immenſe treaſure on them: people of this character conſume their fortune fooliſhly, and make themſelves ridiculous. We then began to diſcourſe of Avignon, but this was a ſubject that did not pleaſe me in the leaſt. I have ſeen there, ſaid he, a young lady, ſo very beautiful, that I would give a thouſand crowns ſhe was my ſecretary's wife. His ſecretary, who did not expect ſuch a joke, frankly anſwered, I ſhould be noways deſirous, Sir, to be in ſuch a ſituation. Why? added the Duke; you would, perhaps, be afraid that I ſhould do you ſome wrong? No, Sir, replied he, you are too wiſe and honeſt; but, according to the manner in which you expreſs yourſelf, there would not be wanting thoſe that would think to the contrary. And for this, added the Duke, do not you know how Mr. ———, a friend of mine, took a wife? three weeks after marriage, ſhe was brought to bed of

two

two children: when they were ſhewn to him, Ah! ſaid he, laughing, welcome ladies; in truth, I did not expect you ſo ſoon. But that is not all; he ordered twenty-four cradles to be provided, and loaded them in a cart, ordering them to be carried to his houſe: his acquaintance aſked him, what need there was for all theſe cradles? he anſwered, If, in one month, I have two children; at the end of the year, I ſhall have twenty-four: and, out of all theſe cradles, there will not be one too many. In this manner the Duke entertained us, and we arrived at Fontainbleau two hours before night. As we came near that place, we met ſeveral people, on horſeback, magnificently dreſſed, being no leſs than the retinue of the King himſelf, who was juſt going out a hunting. Here the Duke was obliged to leave his coach, mount a horſe, and join the company; nor did it avail his proteſting that he had not dined, and that he was dying with hunger and fatigue; for they inſiſted upon his going with them. Seeing with how much intimacy the courtiers treated him, I thought myſelf the more happy in his protection; and already imagined that my fortune was made. I remained

mained in the coach with the secretary, and we soon arrived at the Duke's palace, where we regaled ourselves with the dinner prepared for him.

CHAP. XVI.

*The Duchess of **** takes me for her Gentleman.*

THE Duke did not return till evening, and, as he was both hungry and fatigued, went to bed immediately after supper. As soon as he was up, the next morning, I went to pay my respects to him. Very well, said he, at seeing me, you and my secretary are two men of spirit, to let such violence be used with your master; at least you should have put your hands to your swords, to defend me from that oppression; they have paid me off in such a manner, that I shall feel it for this fortnight. Notwithstanding this, to revenge myself on you, for your cowardice, I have appointed you gentleman to the Duchess of ****; prepare therefore to present yourself to her. On my part, I was very well satisfied with this reproof, thanked heaven for having made me acquainted with him, and I already flattered myself that I should

ſhould make no trifling figure at court. His ſecretary immediately conducted me to the Ducheſs. And are you, ſaid ſhe, to me, that Italian gentleman of whom the Duke ſpoke to me? I am, anſwered I, bowing, and am come, by his orders, to aſſure your Grace of my humble ſervitude. Is it poſſible! added ſhe, your protector is a great viſionary, or yourſelf, Sir, are a prodigy; at this age, ſo many campaigns at ſea, ſo many battles ſuſtained with valour, ſo many cruizers ſent to the bottom, ſo many wounds by you received, of which there does not appear the leaſt ſign! This language ſurpriſed me not a little; not knowing where it would end. I aſſured the Ducheſs, that I had not ſeen any other ſea, but that from Venice to Marſeilles; nor any other fire, but that in a chimney in winter time. Why, added ſhe, the Duke has given ſuch a deſcription of your life, as if you had been the terror of the ſea; and has painted you, to me, in ſuch a manner, as to make me believe that you was all over fire and ſmoak; with two whiſkers of a new invention, that, from ear to ear, covered your face all over. I could ſcarce refrain from laughing at the romantic deſcription the Duke had

given

given of my perſon; when ſhe replied, that it did not ſeem extraordinary to her, that ſuch extravagant whims ſhould come into the head of the Duke; but that it gave her pleaſure to find me ſo different from what ſhe had been made to believe. After I had given an account of myſelf, in the ſame manner as I had done to the Duke, my protector, ſhe called a footman to conduct me to the apartment that ſhe had appointed for me; ordering me, at the ſame time, to come to her the next morning, when ſhe would give me further inſtructions. My apartment conſiſted of two rooms, one within the other, very genteelly furniſhed, and having given the neceſſary orders for my little baggage, that was left at the Flanders Inn, to be brought from Paris, the Duke's gentleman came to congratulate me, in his name, at my arrival, and of the acquiſition, as he ſaid, that his houſe had made. This gentleman's name was Mr. Befone; and from his pleaſing diſpoſition I ſhould directly have contracted a particular intimacy with him, had I been inclined ſo to do. But I had my reaſons for not having too cloſe a connection with any body: however, I took care to avoid giving offence by reſerved behaviour.

He

He congratulated me not a little; assuring me, that my air and manner had very much pleased the family, and that I should be a very welcome guest: in fact, when he conducted me into the common hall, to dinner, I received, from every one, a thousand compliments; which I returned, as politely as I could, by answering each, in particular, in the manner most suitable to their dignity. There were present, the intendant general of the family, the two secretaries, we two gentlemen, two pages, the steward, and the Duchess's waiting-maid. At table there were generally ten of the family, and always three covers extraordinary for those that should accidentally come to visit us. Mr. Befone kept me company all the afternoon: and we went together to wait upon the Duke, my protector, to return him thanks. At night they supped very late; and although I was not accustomed to this manner of living, it no ways disagreed with me; but I supped heartily, and slept better than usual all that night. When I arose in the morning, a footman came to dress my hair, which he did in the genteelest taste; and at mid-day I went to pay my respects to the Duchess, who asked me,

if it was true, as she had been told, that I could not mount on horseback? I answered her, that having made all my journeys either by water, or stage-coaches, I had not had any practice in riding; but as it was my desire to please her, it would require but little to become master of it. She told me, after this, that she thought I was in debt a compliment to the Duke, her husband; and she herself conducted me to him in person. He also paid me a thousand compliments; after which the Duchess took me back with her, and, calling Mr. Befone, ordered him to have me made perfect in the management of a horse; as she was desirous of having me to hunt, and go every where with her. In ten days exercise I could ride every horse in the stable, with as much familiarity as if I had been used to it for many years; at the end of which time, I desired leave, of the Duchess, to go two days to Paris, to sell a horse and chaise that I had left there. In those two days I did my business, and returned to the court with a dress still much more pompous than the first; insomuch that the Duke, on seeing me, said to his lady, I am glad, Madam, that you have a gentleman that does you honour:

really

really you are dreſſed according to your rank. I have no hand in it, anſwered the Ducheſs. So much the worſe, Madam, ſaid he; you are under an obligation to repay him ſuch an expence, which muſt fall heavy on a private perſon. To this I replied, there is no need; it is enough for me to be honoured with your approbation. Theſe, ſaid the Duke, are truly noble ſentiments, that gain you all my love and eſteem: it is a great misfortune to you, that you are not born a woman; to be a man, you are too amiable. At this ſpeech, my face glowed like fire; but, as I naturally had a freſh complexion, it did not take their attention. They then retired to talk apart, and I withdrew to the anti-chamber, leſt my preſence might be a reſtraint upon them. My heart was uneaſy, fearing they had conceived ſome ſuſpicion of me: I ſtayed at the door, liſtening very attentively to what they were ſaying, in order to find out whether I was deceived or not; but my ſuſpicion was nothing more than ſimple conjecture. I have never ſeen, ſaid the Duke, any face of a woman ſo amiable as that of your gentleman: I like him ſo much the more, as, it ſeems to me, that I ſee

painted, in him, your features; and, in his air, a certain I know not what, that reſembles yours. It does not ſeem ſo to me, anſwered the Ducheſs; but, I own, that I ſhould be content to live a few years leſs, to be, in my ſex, ſo young and amiable as my gentleman is in his. So ſhould I alſo, added the Duke; and to ſee you ſo, would give a fourth part of all I am worth; becauſe, in ſuch caſe, I do not know which of us would be beſt off. While they were thus diſcourſing, I thought differently from either of them: I have heard, more than once, that if it was in our own hands to chuſe our ſex, which would be moſt uſeful to us, from the age of thirteen to twenty-three, we ought to chuſe that of a woman; and to be men the remaining part of our lives. The world does us injuſtice, by judging, that we cannot be amiable after thirty years of age; when ſo many men are judged handſome after forty. Reflecting upon this wrong that was done to our ſex, it pleaſed me to be thought what I was not; and, conſidering what I was, I was aſhamed of myſelf. I do not deny, but that my natural vanity would have been agreeably entertained by a crowd of admirers,

being

being in the flower of my age; but to what purpose, said I, is such a pleasure, which passes away so soon! and why should I sacrifice to beauty, those more lasting charms of liberty? Besides this, I found myself engaged to appear in a character very different; and, whatever was to happen to me, I was resolved to see the end of it. All my applications tended to confirm myself always the more in these laudable maxims. By force of reflection, I had conceived such an aversion for the weakness of our sex, that I viewed it, in other women, with an eye of compassion. It will seem strange, to any one, that having commerce every day with courtiers, who were the flower of youth and spirit, I had not taken a liking for any one; nor could I find a person suitable to my taste: I considered love as an enemy, that could be the only cause of my ruin, by venturing a secret on which my honour and fortune depended. Besides this, the Count Termes never was out of my thoughts: it seemed an invioble point of my philosophy, to preserve myself faithful to him as long as I should live; at least, till I should despair of a return. To avoid indulging these deceiving thoughts, all

the time that I had to ſpare in my new employment, and that was a great deal, I ſpent in reading; which enriched my mind with ſuch a diverſity of knowledge, that there was not any one thing mentioned, which appeared new to me, and in which I could not join the diſcourſe. Among other things, it came into my head to write to Italy, to Count Termes; not to indicate to him what was become of me, but only to let him ſee that I was not leſs in love than himſelf. Upon this ſubject I wrote him a ſhort letter, and ſigned it with the name of D'Arville; but put no date, that he might not know how to direct to me. My thought was ſtrange, as, by that means, I deprived myſelf of the pleaſure of hearing from one whom I loved; but I could not do otherwiſe, without the riſk of being diſcovered, when it concerned me, more than ever, to keep myſelf private. I directed the letter to the French camp in Italy; and went to Mr. Befone, deſiring him to put it into the poſt-office. It happened that the Ducheſs's waiting-maid perceived it on the table, as he was making up the packet for Italy; at which ſhe ſhewed ſome ſurprize. As I had recommended ſecreſy to him, he behaved

ed like a man of honour, and told her, that it was his; and, without giving her any further satisfaction, sent it away. When he told me of the fact, I was terribly alarmed, but I did not seem so; on the contrary, I told him, that he might have shewed it to her without difficulty, because there was nothing to which she could have any objection. Miserable me! if she had seen it; but frankness sometimes prevents suspicion, and, luckily for me, there was no more said about it.

CHAP. XVII.

An extraordinary Commission given me by the Duke, my Master.

SEVERAL days had elapsed, in which I had had nothing to do, when one morning, early, the Duke sent for me to his chamber. What can this be? said I, in my heart; should it be any thing about myself? can the letter, wrote to the Count, have given any cause of suspicion? Under these apprehensions, I waited upon him to know his will; but, by his obliging behaviour, he soon removed my suspicions. I have still more reason, said he, to rejoice that you came to my house; because, from the continual

continual information that I receive, of your character, I know I can confide in you. To this preliminary ſpeech, I anſwered as I ought. He then put into my hands a purſe full of piſtoles. Take this, ſaid he, and accept it as a teſtimony of my love, and the confidence I have that you can keep a ſecret. My Lord, anſwered I, I have heard a ſtory of a King, who deſired one of his favourites to aſk whatever he thought proper of him: "Sire, anſwered the favourite, deal as you pleaſe with me, provided you do not make me your ſecret-keeper." I accept the gift of your Grace, and ſhall endeavour to merit your confidence on every occaſion; but if you will diſpenſe with whatever requires my ſecrecy, I ſhall be the more obliged to you: my age, and inexperience of the world, will eaſily perſuade you, it would be putting it in very bad hands: as to any thing elſe, you ſhall find that I am all obedience; and you have only to command me. The confidence I have to repoſe in you, ſaid the Duke, is ſuch, that it need not put you under any apprehenſion: I deſire only this of you—obſerve, with attention, all thoſe people who come moſt frequently to my wife:

not

not that I have the leaſt doubt of her good conduct; but her perſon, being ſuperior to mine, obliges me to have all the regard imaginable for her: I have ſecret reaſons that put me under a neceſſity to know every thing that paſſes: I know, from good authority, that there is an affair carrying on againſt my perſon, into which they are alſo trying to draw in my wife as an accomplice: at the head of this is the Prince of ****, who was my rival; and, from my advanced age, he flatters himſelf, that, with my wife, he ſhall alſo get my eſtate; ſhe being young, and knowing but little of the court, may be eaſily drawn into the ſnare: you may preſerve her, by your attention; and, by adviſing me in time of what you ſee, you may aſſure youſelf of making your fortune in my houſe. While he was thus talking to me, I heard all: I am, ſaid I, in my heart, in the ſervice of the Ducheſs, and her huſband would have me become a ſpy on her actions; he is more jealous than Jove was of Juno, and would have me an Argus to obſerve her ſteps. I replied, that his Grace could make a much better choice, by employing ſome antient domeſtic belonging to the Ducheſs, and who had

more

more experience than myſelf. There is no one, ſaid he, in whom I can confide, except yourſelf, in an affair of ſuch conſequence. But, Sir, ſaid I, ſuppoſe I was capable of ſerving you, if the Ducheſs ſhould find it out, what is to become of me? What have you to fear? replied the Duke, it is enough that you do your part; for the reſt, you may depend upon me. At theſe words I bowed; and retired ſo perplexed, and confuſed, that I did not know the way to my apartment. Here, thought I, the promiſed happineſs of my new ſtation is at an end; my mind is again in a tempeſt, and my heart full of grief. One of theſe methods I muſt take, and, in either, I evidently ſaw my ruin: I was either to betray my miſtreſs, and expoſe myſelf to the reproofs of my own heart, and the juſt reſentment of an irritated woman; or, I was to diſobey a jealous huſband, who would not long ſuffer me to continue in his houſe; or, I was under a neceſſity to demand my diſcharge from the family. But what reaſon could I give the Duke, my protector, for rendering myſelf ſo unworthy of his favour, for which I knew myſelf ſo greatly obliged to him. I depoſited the gift, the

Duke

Duke had made me, with my other money; but intereſt predominated in me ſo little, in oppoſition to my other paſſions, that it never came into my head even to ſee to what ſum it amounted.

After dinner, I locked myſelf up in my room, that I might conſider how to manage matters with the Duke, who had ordered me to return to him towards four o'clock in the afternoon. I reſolved to comply with the maxims of the court, by diſſembling my real ſentiments: in fact, I went with a free and open air, and heard the new leſſons which he gave me on that ſubject: I promiſed to keep to his inſtructions; I even appeared joyful at receiving this commiſſion, to be able to ſhew him, how much I devoted myſelf to his intereſt; but I left him with a firm intention to do nothing inconſiſtent with my own inclination. On going out of the Duke's apartment, I met Madam Cafardo, waiting maid to the Ducheſs, my miſtreſs: this meeting I ſhould gladly have avoided; but to paſs her by, without ſpeaking, would have been uncivil. She accoſted me, ſaying, that her miſtreſs was not going out of the houſe that day, and that we were both at liberty: ſhe propoſed our taking a

walk

walk together; and it was neceſſary, for conveniency, to comply. Her diſcourſe began with praiſing me, of which I was already ſick, hearing it repeated from every part. She afterwards talked about Italy, of which place I thought her a native, and railed againſt the cruelty of the Italians, in keeping their wives like ſlaves: the ſame cuſtom, ſaid ſhe, prevails in Spain, where I have been ſeveral years with my miſtreſs: my mother died in bringing me into the world; my father was a lieutenant-colonel of the regiment of Perigard, and was killed at the ſiege of Landaw. As my mother had ſuckled the Ducheſs, ſo ſhe took care of me, who was not above ſeven years of age. When I was with her in Spain, Signior Cafardo, a Spaniſh captain, took me for his wife. The Ducheſs thought, by this, ſhe had made my fortune; but I was no ſooner his wife, than he was obliged to depart for the country, and I along with him. His whimſical humour was ſoon degenerated into a beaſtly wildneſs; he took more care of his horſes, than of his wife; and I was confined to the narrow boundaries of my chamber, nor did I enjoy any company but that of my own reflection.

Jealous

Jealous to excefs, even of his own brother, he would not let me go to church, unlefs he went with me. After a painful ſlavery of ſeven years, I was freed of him by a wound, which he received at the ſiege of Barcelona. I informed the Ducheſs of his death, and ſhe immediately recalled me to her ſervice. After the death of Captain Cafardo, I found, in his bureau two thouſand piſtoles, which ſum I have at this time in my poſſeſſion. She gave me ſeveral hints that ſhe would, with good will, embark in a ſecond marriage; and hoped to have better fortune than ſhe had in the firſt. She was not without charms, but had a higher opinion of herſelf than ſhe ought; and the favour of her miſtreſs rendered her ſtill more conceited.

CHAP. XVIII.

Means taken, by me, to exempt myſelf from the Duke's Commiſſion.

WHEN I parted with Madam Cafardo, my anxiety in what manner beſt to act, in the diſagreeable buſineſs in which I had been employed by the Duke, added greatly to the uneaſineſs of my mind.

Two days were now paſſed, ſince I had ſeen the Ducheſs; the third day ſhe ſent for me, and was ſurpriſed to ſee me look pale and melancholy: in fact, for two days I had eat little, and ſlept leſs, being very much troubled in mind. She aſked me a thouſand queſtions, to find out the cauſe of my melancholy; and perhaps was perſuaded that ſhe had found out the reaſon, when ſhe enquired, if I had kept the note of the coſt of the cloaths which ſhe had ſeen me wear? I told her, I had not. She ordered me to make it out, and bring it to her. Your Grace, anſwered I, is miſtaken, if you think that my trouble proceeds from any bad management in my œconomy; when your Grace is better acquainted with me, you will find, that no ſentiment of vile intereſt will ever be capable to give me the

the leaſt diſquiet. I have motives for affliction, for which your Grace cannot find a remedy. The only means to free me from it, will be to give me my diſcharge from your ſervice. But what! interrupted the Ducheſs, do you deſire to leave me, without letting me know the cauſe? this I ſhall never permit: tell me, firſt, what induces you to take ſuch a ſtep; and then, if your reſolution is reaſonable, I alſo ſhall be reaſonable enough not to oppoſe your inclination. Madam, added I, I am bound to keep it ſecret, my word and honour being pledged. I can alſo aſſure you, ſaid ſhe, on my word and honour, that, provided you reveal it to me, I ſhall make no uſe whatever of the ſecret, without your permiſſion. Then, I replied, I ſhall obey your Grace; but you are to remember, that, after this, you are to grant me my diſcharge, and ſo order matters with the Duke, my protector, that he may not ſay I have uſed him ill. All this I ſhall do, ſaid ſhe, when neceſſity demands it; and you may rely on my word. I then candidly laid before her, the commiſſion I had from the Duke, her huſband; and proteſted that to be the ſole cauſe of my afflictoin. The Ducheſs remained

very much aſtoniſhed at my account; but, returning ſoon to herſelf, and putting on an air of gravity, which gave incredible weight to her words, Sir, ſaid ſhe, to me, it can never be true, that, for a thing ſo frivolous as this, you deſire to leave me: know you, that I depend not on the Duke, my huſband, only in what I pleaſe; my people have nothing to do with him, nor ought he to concern himſelf with them; perſevere in being true to me, as you ſeem to be, and fear nothing; I am able, thank God, to render dangerous to him, whatever he dare attempt againſt either my perſon or yours: when he ſees that you are not fallen into his net, he'll have the greater eſteem for you, and behave with more reſpect: it is not difficult to deceive him; he wanted to induce you to betray me, for which reaſon he deſerves to be betrayed himſelf. Madam, ſaid I, ſince heaven will have it ſo, that I am to depend on you, rather than on the Duke, I plainly ſee, that I ought not to undertake any thing that may be detrimental to you; and rely ſo much on your protection, that, I dare ſwear inviolable fidelity to you: but I depend on your diſcretion, that you will not employ me in any thing,

that

that may be inconſiſtent with the character of an honeſt man. The Ducheſs, hearing me pronounce theſe few words with a frankneſs of ſpirit, and tone of voice, which ſhewed that they came from my heart, was ſo moved, that, ſqueezing me courteouſly by the hand, I am certain, added ſhe, of your attachment to my perſon; be you alſo certain of my gratitude: from this moment, I aſſign you a yearly penſion of a thouſand crowns; this is the firſt proof, that you may think I ſpeak as I mean. Becauſe you ſhall not believe that I will abuſe your fidelity, by employing you in things unbecoming your character; I will lay open to you, from this moment, the only motives that my huſband can have for treating me in this manner. You ſee, that between his age and mine, there is a great difference; I married him only in obedience to the deſires of the court, and to pleaſe my relations; and ſhould have been glad that he had found my inclinations unengaged, when I was given to him in marriage. But, in my heart, the prince of **** had prevailed; and it was not in my power to give to the Duke, what was not my own. I ſhould not be a woman of honour, ſhould I be wanting in that conjugal affection which I

owe to him alone; but is it not indiſcreet of a man of honour, to be diffident of his wife? and, through mere diffidence, he would make me a ſlave! If the Duke was to die, I ſhould not have the leaſt ſcruple to marry the prince; and, on my account only, he defers taking a wife. I do not, on this account, deſire the Duke's death; but ſubmit to the will of heaven, and ſtudy how to regulate my conduct, for the preſent, as prudence and honour beſt ſuggeſt. This, Sir, is all the cabal, and ſecret management, which my huſband ſays is in agitation to haſten his death. Let him live as long as heaven pleaſes, but let others alſo live; and if jealouſy torments him, he muſt not blame any but himſelf. There is no occaſion, Madam, ſaid I, that your Grace ſhould leſſen yourſelf, in ſuch a manner, as to give me a minute account of your affairs; without this, I was enough perſuaded of your honour and prudence: but this encreaſes my eſteem, and the concern I ſhall always have to ſerve you where I am able. With theſe expreſſions I aſſured her of my faithful attachment; and ſhe was ſo well convinced of it, that, by my means, a new method was opened to keep up her honeſt ſecret

correſpondence

correſpondence with the prince; which ſhe probably would not have made uſe of, if the Duke, her huſband, had not given motives thereto by his jealous madneſs. In fact, the Ducheſs was not long before ſhe ſet me to work, charging me with a letter to be put into the prince's own hand, but ſhe firſt inſiſted on my reading it. The letter was as under:

" Dear Sir,

Since we ſaw each other laſt, a little novelty has happened, of which I ſhall inform you the firſt time we meet. Your abſence from the court, has cauſed me an incredible deal of trouble. The gentleman that bears this to you, has been ſome days paſt in my ſervice, in whoſe fidelity we may depend: he has, to this hour, given me ſuch convincing proofs thereof, as I ſhall tell you by word of mouth, that with him we may permit all our reſerve. To-morrow I will attend you at the uſual place, and ſhall be always the ſame, that is,

All Your's, &c."

When I had read the letter, Now, ſays the Ducheſs, I will tell you how you are to conduct yourſelf, for the delivery,

livery, without danger. Come with me to the audience of the King: I will give you my little lap-dog to hold in your hand; with it you will wait in the park, till the prince arrives; though he does not know you, you will not pass unnoticed by him: he, knowing my little dog, will immediately think you are there by my orders; and, under pretence of playing with the dog, will ask you if you have any thing for him. This is the signal, by which you cannot be deceived. It is enough that you have the letter in your hat; he will take it, without any body's perceiving it. As she told me, in fact so it happened. To tell the truth, this commission had created, in my breast, some little repugnance; but most things appear to our minds, in the light our passions paint them. The situation of the Duchess was truly to be pitied, and her maxims were regulated by reason and honesty. I had read the letter, but had found nothing that was bad in it; and was much prejudiced in her favour, without knowing the reason. I had no sooner executed the orders of the Duchess, than I was surprised by the Duke, who was curious to know if I had any news for him, in consequence of

of his commands to me. I was walking in the garden with Madam Cafardo, who grew every day more and more in love with me, and was endeavouring to kindle the ſame fire in my breaſt; but ſhe did not know how badly her deſires were adapted to my circumſtances. Seeing the Duke come, ſhe left me; I ſtrove to avoid him, but he came up to me, and, taking me familiarly by the hand, aſked, if I had any news? I ſeemed at firſt to be ſurpriſed, and anſwered him, that his Grace certainly knew, better than me, the news at court. But added he, I do not mean that; I ſpeak of the Ducheſs. Oh, Sir, ſaid I, I underſtand; but your Grace knows that my Lady, ſince you ſpoke to me, has not been out of the houſe. I know that, replied he, but have you obſerved nothing in the houſe, that I ought to know? Nothing, Sir, ſaid I, from what I have been able to diſcern. Well, well, ſaid he, it will not be always ſo, there will certainly be ſome news ſoon: be attentive; farewell ..... I leave you, becauſe I would not be obſerved by any body.

The day following, towards four o'clock, the Ducheſs ſent for me, to mount

mount a horſe, and accompany her. I was not wanting at the preciſe hour; ſhe went alone in the coach, and I followed on horſeback. We took the road to the foreſt of Fontainbleau, in the way to Paris: when we were near Paris, we turned down a long ſhady path, that led directly to the foreſt. Some hundred yards from the foreſt the Ducheſs got out of the coach, ordering her ſervants to wait for her; and making me give her my arm, walked ſlowly down the ſame path.

CHAP. XIX.

The Ducheſs meets with the Prince; and the Conſequences of that Meeting.

I Was very curious to know where this would finiſh; but the Ducheſs advanced towards the wood, without ſaying a word to me. It ſtruck into my thoughts, that ſome meeting was going on with the Prince, nor was I without apprehenſion; inſomuch that the Ducheſs herſelf ſeemed diſturbed. Love is blind, ſaid I, to myſelf, and frequently breaks the meaſures of the moſt refined prudence: the Duke is jealous, and jealouſy has an hundred eyes to ſee even more than is true: thoſe who

who fear every thing, frequently discover more than they seek for. Who knows but the Duke, doubly politic, pretends to confide in me, to entrap us both in the same net! and if this should happen, how are we to get out? or how are we to defend ourselves? Agitated by these thoughts, I walked in continual suspicion; and, at the trembling of the leaves, thought myself in danger of my life: not that I wanted either spirit or courage to defend myself, in case of a surprize: the management of a sword was no new exercise to me, as I had, for some time past, for two hours in every day, taken lessons of fencing: I had also, in my pocket, the pistols I bought at Dijon, and had courage to use them in case of need. But the reputation, both of the Duchess and myself, put me in more apprehensions than my life. Resolving to risk all, in defence of a person that put confidence in me, I followed with fear, and would not have abandoned her had it cost me my life. When we had got at some distance from the coach, the Duchess stopped, and turning herself about, see, said she, to me, we are out of the sight of my servants; I am now in your power, and shall confide in

you.

So saying, she made me turn to the right, into another narrow path, so thick with trees, and covered from the sun, that a person could hardly be distinguished twenty yards off. At the end of this, we came to a little round house, of about thirty yards in circumference, surrounded with trees, so thick, and so large, that it seemed the middle of the wood. This is the place, said the Duchess, where it is usual for me to meet the Prince, who comes by another path, and should be here at this hour. In fact, we were no sooner got out of this close path, than we saw him coming to meet us, with that impatience peculiar to a passionate lover. Knowing me to be the same person who had delivered him the letter, he paid me a genteel compliment; but he had not much time to lose with me. The Duchess then ordered me to place myself at the entrance of that straight path, to observe if any one should come that way, and to apprize her of it by coughing. No, said the Prince, your coughing will be suspected; take this repeater, and, if any one comes, make it strike, that I may retire by my path, and the Duchess by hers. The Duchess approved of this method; I took the watch,

and

and poſted myſelf, as a centinel, at ſuch a diſtance that I could ſee them, tho' I could not hear what they ſaid. Luckily nothing happened to interrupt their diſcourſe, which laſted a good half hour; the Prince went by one path, the Ducheſs came and joined me; we then got into our path, and, walking ſlowly as we came, advanced towards the coach. When we were on the great road, ſhe aſked, if I ſhould ſee the Duke the next day? and, what I intended to ſay to him? Well, Madam, ſaid I, tomorrow I ſhall go and give him an account, without his aſking me, that your Grace was walking in the foreſt; that you went there alone, and that you returned alone; becauſe, in fact, the Prince neither went nor returned with you: if he ſhould aſk me, whether I was with you all the time? I ſhall anſwer him, frankly, yes; and, to tell the truth, I never loſt ſight of you. But, ſaid the Ducheſs, he may aſk you, if I ſpoke to any perſon? if any body accoſted the coach? and ſuch like queſtions. Doubt not, Madam, ſaid I; I know how to behave myſelf, in ſuch a manner, as to render void his moſt curious enquiry; and, I flatter myſelf, you will be quite content with me. In

ſuch like diſcourſe we got to the coach, and retired to the palace. The next morning I went to pay my reſpects to the Duke, after having put on that virile aſſurance neceſſary to deceive him: there was no great occaſion, for he took, as ſolid gold, this my artful relation. He aſked me a thouſand queſtions; but, as he confided in me, he remained ſatisfied with my anſwers, and began to talk with me, on other things, with as much affability as if I had been his ſon. I know not where he was going that morning, or whether he waited for the appointed time; but he aſked me, what it was o'clock? to oblige him, I took out my watch, and remained like a ſtatue, on finding it to be that which the Prince had left in my hands, and which I had kept in my pocket, intending, by the firſt opportunity, to give it to him again. The Duke took it in his hand, and obſerving it attentively, you have a very handſome repeater, ſaid he, but I think I have ſeen it ſeveral times before; how did you come by it? Sir, ſaid I, (my blood running chill with fear) it is probable you may have ſeen this repeater in another's hands; becauſe I am about buying it of the Princeſs of * * * * * *'s gentleman. What

does

does he aſk for it? ſaid the Duke; I replied, he demands forty Louiſd'ores, but I intend to try it a few days in my pocket before I pay him the money. By this excuſe, I hoped to come off with honour; and to tell him afterwards, in caſe he ſhould not ſee it any more in my hands, that it did not go well, and, for that reaſon, I would not buy it. But, by this means, I was more puzzled than ever; the Duke replied, that it was made by a very eminent hand, and that I need not doubt of it's goodneſs; that it was well worth the forty Louis-d'ores, and that if I would not be at the expence for it, he would; that I might have it as a proof of his remembrance and eſteem for me. So ſaying, he opened a bureau, counted me out forty Louiſd'ores, gave me the watch, and ſent me away. Here am I more perplexed than ever; I found myſelf under an obligation to reſtore it to the Prince; and it was neceſſary for me to have it, that the Duke might ſee, when occaſion offered, that I eſteemed his preſent. I was not without ſuſpicion that the Duke had known it, but that he pretended not on purpoſe to upbraid me with my infidelity; and, in this confuſion, I knew not what ſtep to take.

An act of ſimple inadvertency had made me have recourſe to an excuſe, to avoid a diſorder; but that innocent excuſe was likely to produce a greater ill, and probably would have produced it, if I had not found a remedy. I did not know better what to do, than to go immediately to the Ducheſs, and inform her of the fact. Entering her room, Oh! Madam, ſaid I, you do not know what has happened! What is it? ſaid ſhe, ſurpriſed and trembling; I told her the caſe, and her fears ceaſed. But you frightened me, ſaid ſhe, when there was no occaſion for it: it is almoſt impoſſible that my huſband ſhould know the Prince's watch; notwithſtanding this, as there is no other remedy, ſtand to what you have ſaid, and I will think of the remainder. Theſe words reviv-ed me a little; but I had hardly recovered myſelf from this ſurprize, but I fell into a greater. Changing the diſcourſe, Bring me that picture that is on the table there, ſaid ſhe. On taking it up, and obſerving it, I thought I had ſeen it before; and immediately recollected, that it reſembled the one I had ſeen with Duli, the Italian merchant, whom I had met with on my journey. They pretend, ſaid the Ducheſs, taking

ing it out of my hand, that this picture is like me; probably it was like me, but it has very little reſemblance at preſent: what think you of it? My confuſion, at theſe words, was incredible; by this I came to underſtand, that my miſtreſs was the perſon mentioned by Duli, of whom he preſerved the picture: I was ſurpriſed I had not found it out before, and perhaps it was that I had forgot it, or rather, becauſe her more advanced age had altered her features, in ſuch a manner, that, without a particular obſervation, one could not diſtinguiſh the reſemblance. Now I found I was privy to a ſecret, of which ſhe had not the leaſt ſuſpicion. Whilſt the Ducheſs was expecting my anſwer, thinking perhaps that my reſpect kept me from giving my opinion, ſpeak, ſaid ſhe, freely your ſentiments; do you think this reſembles me? I anſwered, as in fact it was, that between the picture and the original there was ſome little difference; but I turned it to her praiſe, by ſaying, that her lively air could not be repreſented, as it ought, by the moſt excellent painter. The Ducheſs laughed, and added, that ſhe found, in that picture, ſomething amiable, which in vain ſhe had looked for in her face;

and I do not underſtand, added ſhe, why the Duke, my huſband, ſhould maintain, that you reſemble me in the air of your face, when I find, that you rather reſemble this my picture than you do me. This was much the ſame with what I had heard the Duke ſay, a few days ago, as I ſtood in the anti-chamber; but this troubled me, and made me bluſh; which the Ducheſs interpreted for an act of modeſt reſpect, and, making me a preſent of her picture that I might always think of her, aſked me, if Mr. Befone, her huſband's gentleman, was my confidant and friend? I anſwered her, that I thought ſo, according to the continual proofs he gave me of his honeſty and candour. Then, replied ſhe, inform yourſelf, from him, what correſpondence he has with Count Termes, who was in the army of Italy; if he has wrote to him lately, by order of my huſband; and to what end my huſband holds this correſpondence with him: Mrs. Cafardo aſſures me, that, with her own eyes, ſhe ſaw a letter directed to him; and therefore do not be eaſily put off: the affair muſt be managed with great dexterity, and I know that you are not deficient of it, when you really have it at heart to do me a pleaſure.

pleaſure. I could have ſatisfied the Ducheſs immediately, by confeſſing, that the letter, which Mrs. Cafardo had ſeen, was mine; but as all this regarded my own ſecret, it gave me ſome apprehenſions, and made me go cautiouſly about it. I only anſwered then, that I would do my endeavour to ſatisfy her; and with this, took my leave.

CHAP. XX.

New Diſcoveries in regard to the Ducheſs, and Declaration of Madam Cafardo.

IF ever I returned confuſed and afflicted to my room, this was the time; and I had good reaſon: what a labyrinth is this, ſaid I, to myſelf, of which I cannot ſee the end! my miſtreſs, without doubt, is the Princeſs of whom Duli ſpoke, and who was delivered, privately, of a daughter in his houſe; the Duke pretends that I reſemble this picture, drawn for her in the flower of her age; ſhe has a great deſire to know, what correſpondence paſſes between her huſband and Count Termes: is it poſſible, that I am got into the houſe of my mother, without knowing it? and, if it it ſhould be ſo, what will become of me? oh! how I ramble; or, perhaps,

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it is my vanity makes me dote: Duli was half drunk; or, perhaps, he wanted me to think him a man of conſequence, or cabinet ſecretary: that Princeſs of his became a mother in Rome, I was educated at Avignon; the affair in regard to Count Termes is known alſo to Madam Cafardo, then it cannot be an affair that requires great ſecrecy, as ſhe is not looked upon to be a woman capable of keeping it; and I all this while have the letters from my mother, nor has the writing of them any likeneſs with thoſe I have ſeen of the Ducheſs ..... Mine are all apprehenſions; I am uneaſy without reaſon. Thus I argued with myſelf; but many difficulties remained, which ſeemed to me inſurmountable. It was neceſſary to give the Ducheſs ſome anſwer concerning the letter ſent to the Count, without diſcovering that it was mine, and without running the riſk of being caught in a lye; it was alſo neceſſary that I ſhould agree in my ſtory with Mr. Befone. Excluſive of all this, I was concerned to think what I ſhould ſay to the Duke about the watch; and the dangerous character of Madam Cafardo who carried every trifling thing to her miſtreſs, perplexed me not a little. Diffident of

every

every thing which I either saw or heard, I placed myself before a looking-glass, with the picture in my hand which the Duchess had given me, and began to compare the features with my own; in fact, I began to think that the Duke was in the right; but with what certainty could I trust to an imperfect resemblance, of which we see frequent examples: I then took into my hand that of Count Termes, which I always observed with pleasure, to examine which of the two was best drawn; at this instant Madam Cafardo surprised me, and I endeavoured to conceal the pictures, but had not time to do it. I ought to go about my business, said she, finding you engaged in the contemplation of your lover; but I am sincere, nor can I dissemble any longer my affection for you: I love you to such a degree, that I am no longer mistress of myself, seeing that you are blind to my tenderness, or, if you are sensible of it, you only abuse it with slighting me. Madam, said I, you are in an error; what I was looking at, is not the picture of any of my lovers, and I am surprised how you can mortify, in this manner, a young man who has always shewed the greatest esteem for you.

What!

What! said she, can you deny it was the picture of one of your lovers, which you had just now in your hand? See, Madam, replied I, if I have not reason to deny it. I then put into her hand the picture of Count Termes, at which she remained astonished. You are right, said she, I am disarmed; but, alas! have compassion on me, if my passion has made me take a step unbecoming my character: I have loved you from the first moment I saw you; your insensibility has only served to encrease my passion; I am resolved to love you as long as I live; and, if your heart corresponds with your face, you will not be ungrateful to me. You are perfect, Madam, said I, (interrupting her) in the art of love, but I am too young in that art to know how to answer you; I am of opinion that you do it to banter me, as it appears unlikely to me, that a lady of your age, merit, and experience, would condescend to fall in love with a boy. Madam Cafardo here became serious, assuring me of the sincerity of her affection, and reproved me tenderly, as if she knew me to be designedly insensible. She had, indeed, judged rightly; but was far from guessing the real motive. I told her, that,

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in truth, I had not yet been in love with any one; that I might, perhaps, hereafter, have an affection for her, and that she was very worthy of it; but that, at the same time, I was desirous my heart and lips should go together, if ever I did marry. Then, added she, promise me, at least, not to love any one else; which I was obliged to promise, though without any intention to keep my word: my fencing-master knocking at the door, Madam Cafardo retired, though much dissatisfied, and I took my hour's exercise as usual.

Towards night Mr. Befone came to me, and I told him, that the Duchess had got intelligence of the letter sent to Count Termes; that I had reason for not saying it was mine, and begged of him to say the same, in case he should be asked. He exclaimed greatly against Madam Cafardo, as a woman who wanted to know every thing, and could keep nothing secret; assuring me also, that he would affirm it to be his letter, and that there was nothing of importance in it. Early the next morning the Duchess sent one of the servants for me; this impatience made me suspect that she desired to know what account I could give her of the letter, and I, being

being prepared with an anſwer, waited upon her to know her commands. This, ſaid ſhe, is a letter which you muſt deliver into the Prince's own hands, before mid-day; and I will tell you in what manner you muſt convey it to him. This meſſage could not have happened at a worſe time, not that I was unwilling to ſerve the Ducheſs in a matter of ſuch conſequence, but I was apprehenſive of being obliged to deliver the watch to the Prince, which I thought he would certainly aſk for. The Ducheſs having inſtructed me what method I ſhould take to deliver the billet to the Prince, I took my leave. I was ordered to wait in a remote part of the park, where the Prince was to come, and not to move from thence: twelve o'clock was the time limited; and, although the thoughts of the watch troubled me much, I reſolved to return it to the Prince.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXI.

An important Secret discovered by me, one Night in the Garden.

AS I was going to the park, I met Madam Cafardo, who was coming from the Duke's apartment; her first reproof to me was, that, after having so often expressed her real love to me, I never would do her the favour to pay her a visit in her own apartment. I excused myself by answering, that I thought, between us, there was no occasion for those ceremonies, when necessity obliged us to see one another every day, and that I must beg her excuse, at present, being on business of consequence for the Duchess. She departed in a very ill-humour, and I went on to the park to execute my commission; the Prince did not come all that morning to the appointed place, and I waited there till it was almost dark, when I met him, and delivered the billet the Duchess had given me, which he immediately read: I then took out of my pocket the watch, saying, dear Sir, the other day you forgot to take back your watch of me, nor had I time to give it you; here it is. No,

ſaid he, the Ducheſs has ordered me to let you keep it, upon condition you'll tell me what is the reaſon. This treat of the Ducheſs ſeemed to me ſo delicate, that my veneration increaſed ſtill more for her. I told the Prince what had happened to me with the Duke, and the pretext that I had made with him; he laughed, aſſuring me, that it was not poſſible that the Duke could know the watch; but that it was neceſſary for me to have it; as he had paid for it, he could ſay he had made me a preſent of it. Thus, for once, my imprudence had done me more good than harm; I had got a watch, and forty Louiſd'ores. So true it is, that accidents oftener decide for our good, or harm, than human prudence. When the Prince was gone, I began to meditate, in myſelf, how I could find out what connexions the Ducheſs had with Count Termes, the better to ſee in what water I was fiſhing, and what I had to fear. It ſeemed to me, I had no object to trouble me but this; and if I could gain ſome light in this matter, I ſhould be entirely content. I was ſo loſt in this thought, that I forgot the hour of ſupper; nor did I care much for going, as I had but little appetite, and dreaded

dreaded another assault from Madam Cafardo, which would put me out of all patience. I tarried so long in the park, that it was very late when I got home. Coming near the palace, I heard the footsteps of somebody coming towards me: the rustling of the silk habit gave me reason to believe it to be a woman; the hasty walk, and voice, tho' low, convinced me that it was Madam Cafardo; and I directly suspected, that, not finding me in my chamber, she came to look for me. I placed myself behind a thick bush, and watched her attentively, being curious to know the event. By the light of the moon, I could distinguish another person with Madam Cafardo, but could not be certain who it was. At length I heard them say, He is certainly gone to bed. Oh! then, thought I to myself, they are talking of me; and, soon after, heard Madam Cafardo say, Do you know I am afraid that I am with child? Had a thunderbolt fallen at my feet, it could not have caused me more confusion: if, at first, her foolish passion made me pity her, I had now lost all my esteem for her; and I began to suspect the real truth. As they walked slowly on, and frequently stopped, I

had the opportunity to hear more: If you can bring about, said he that was with her, the scheme suggested to me by the Buffoon, to induce Richard to marry you, we are both safe; and I will add to your fortune a thousand pistoles. Though my ears and eyes were fully employed, I could not hear any thing more, nor find out the person who was talking with her: they took a turn or two in the garden, as if they were waiting till all the family were asleep; they then went into the palace together, and I heard no more of them. When I had lost sight of them, I burst out into a fit of laughter; then ran to my apartment, and, without lighting a candle, went directly to bed. There I reflected upon what I had heard from Madam Cafardo: It is no wonder, thought I, that her poor husband was jealous; and who would not be of such a wife? her love now gives me no more trouble, as I have learned how to treat her; and it is well for me that I am not in a state to be her husband. With these and such like reflections, I passed away two hours without being able to sleep; nor had scarcely closed my eyes, when a footman came to inform me, that the Duchess waited for me in the

garden;

garden: this obliged me to dreſs again in haſte; I excuſed myſelf to her for making her wait, but ſhe laughed, ſaying, that I was not obliged to be a conjuror, and to know that ſhe would be up ſo early that morning. Laſt night, added ſhe, I was not able to cloſe my eyes, which made me get up to take a little freſh air: I have ſent to ſee if Madam Cafardo was up, to come and keep me company; but ſhe is ſtill aſleep, though ſhe uſually riſes very early. Here I had ſome difficulty to refrain from laughing; but I took care to avoid it, as, in ſo doing, I ſhould have been under a neceſſity to inform the Ducheſs of the reaſon, and give her ſome cauſe to ſuſpect her Maid of Honour. When ſhe had walked about an hour, ſhe went in; but firſt aſked me about the letter to the Prince, and how I had acted with Mr. Befone? to which I anſwered in a ſatisfactory manner. And now finding myſelf alone, the night adventures of Madam Cafardo returned to my mind, and I thought it would afford me ſome diverſion to go and pay her a viſit unexpectedly, and drop a hint that I was no ſtranger to her intrigues. I ſhould have gone directly, if I had not met Mr. Befone, who inſiſt-

ed on my company to walk with him in the garden. After having talked together about the delightfulneſs of that place, This is nothing, ſaid he, to what you ſhall ſee at Verſailles; I think you do not ſeem to have any reliſh for them; it is uncommon to find a young man of your age ſo inſenſible to the gaieties of a court, in which many are beyond reaſon emerged. Sir, ſaid I, I am young, and a foreigner, without relations, or friends; and, what is worſe, have but little experience of the world: you can enjoy the pleaſures of a court; and if any thing unexpected ſhould happen, you know in what manner to act. That is true, replied he; yet, I aſſure you, I am weary of it: thoſe pleaſures, which pleaſed me in my youth, are now tireſome; and, though perhaps you will not believe me, I have more pleaſure in your company, than in all the court: but I am of opinion, added he, that Madam Cafardo is the principal cauſe of your ſolitary life; every one ſays that you are not indifferent to her allurements: ſhe has her merits; and I cannot blame you, as, at your age, I perhaps ſhould have done worſe. As to this, replied I, laughing, if Madam Cafardo does not want attractions, neither

ther do I believe that ſhe wants lovers. I know nothing of that, ſaid he; but if it is ſo, ſhe is not of ſo cruel a diſpoſition as to refuſe you a place in her heart: your youth alone deſerves it. It is very certain that the women of this age are great admirers of novelty, and a lover of long ſtanding is often obliged to give way to a new gallant: the ladies would be better pleaſed, if their lovers were like the ſeaſon of the year, which changes every three months. If this is the caſe, ſaid I, it is beſt to have nothing to do with them. Our walk ended at the hour for dinner, at which Madam Cafardo was not preſent; and I got up from table ſooner than uſual, becauſe I had a very great deſire to go and pay her a viſit.

CHAP

CHAP. XXII.

A horrid Scheme formed againſt me by Madam Cafardo.

I found her half undreſſed, diſcontented, and pale in the face, which made her ſeem ſtupified. I took that opportunity to aſk her, if ſhe found herſelf indiſpoſed? I am not ill, anſwered ſhe, but I know not what has been the matter all night, for I have not been able to ſleep. I muſt ſay, Madam, added I, the paſt night has been fatal to ſleep, becauſe the Ducheſs alſo laments that ſhe could not ſleep; and, two hours after midnight, I was walking in the garden —. At that hour, in the garden! ſhe replied: at that hour exactly, anſwered I; and having heard there I know not what, at that ſame hour, and knowing that it could not be the Ducheſs, I imagined I had heard you. Not I, added ſhe; I was in bed before midnight. Then I muſt have been miſtaken, replied I; and am ſo ſorry for your indiſpoſition, that I would willingly ſtay and bear you company, if a commiſſion from the Ducheſs did not call me elſewhere. Thus I left her, nor do I know what ſhe thought of the viſit: I know,

however,

however, that she became more reasonable afterwards with regard to me, and did not trouble me with her love: it was not because the fire was extinguished, but perhaps she covered it under the cinders of very cold indifference, that it might prove more fatal to me; as, in fact, it happened. What had been said in the garden, the preceding night, regarded me so much, that it excited my curiosity to know still more. Madam Cafardo's lover was some person belonging to the house, because they both went into the palace together: some one else, of whom they were discoursing (having given him the name of Buffoon) was an accomplice in the intrigue: and I was desirous to know who they both were. It was not likely that Madam Cafardo, after what she had heard from me, would hazard any more her intrigues in the garden, but I was deceived in my conjectures; for having posted myself on the watch, the following night, I was assured of the truth of what had passed the night before; and, among other things, I heard the secret lover of Madam Cafardo say, if it should so happen that you cannot honestly cover your being with child, by marrying Richard, you will not

want

want an excuſe to retire to Paris till you are brought to bed. Alſo that night, the Buffoon was mentioned as a man of great cunning, and capable of performing and conducting any thing; but I could not find out who he was. The affair ſeemed now more ſerious to me than ever: I ſuſpected they were plotting againſt me; and although my ſex put it in my power to defend myſelf, rather than come to ſuch an extremity I ſhould have ſacrificed my life. Several weeks paſſed without any thing material happening; as Madam Cafardo treated me with the greateſt indifference, I regulated my conduct in the ſame manner towards her. She was become in my eyes, an object of horror and contempt. One day I obſerved a perſon come out of her room, whom I thought I had ſeen before, but could not recollect either when, or where: he was a fat man, of low ſtature, of about forty years of age, of a dogged look, and a face that did not bode any good: he was tolerably well dreſſed, and gave himſelf the air of a man of quality. Paſſing by me, he looked at me with ſurprize, as if he ſeemed to know me; but with ſo much diſdain, as if he thought I did not merit

rit that honour. This behaviour made me more desirous than ever of knowing who he was; and meeting Mr. Befone, a few minutes after, as I knew he must have seen him, I asked him, if he knew who he was? The person you saw, said he, is a Buffoon, a character which now a-days makes a figure in the house of the great: his profession is that of a comedian, in which his ability is particularly good, but, on the contrary, his villainous talents are much superior, and I do not believe that, among the living, there is a rascal of so black a heart, or a greater reprobate; at least, all who have had dealings with him give him that character. The Duke protects him, because he pretends that he served him once as a pimp, a murderer, and a spy; and, as the Marquis of * * * *, his nephew, has the inspection of the court theatres, this fellow applies to the Duke whenever he has occation to beg a favour for himself, or a pension for the other comedians. At present he is the head of a company from Troyes; but being hated by them for the presumption he uses them with, and some discontent happening, he wants to get clear of them, and to get a place, for himself

himſelf and family, in the King's company; in which he will without doubt ſucceed, as the Buffoons have beſt ſucceſs now a-days: though there are people of credit who countenance him, I have never had any thing to do with him; nor do I know what the Duke finds in him, to maintain him; his extraction muſt be very bad, being of a race of baſtards for four generations back, all the vileſt dregs of the kingdom.

No picture could be more lively than this; and Mr. Befone could not ſay enough, when he declaimed againſt the abuſes and corruption of the world. Theſe particularities made me remember him for one of thoſe I had ſeen on the theatre at Troyes, and pointed out to me, by the courteous hair-dreſſer, by the name of Monſieur Tartar. And ſo he is called here, replied Mr. Befone, becauſe his father had him in Tartary, and paſſed over Muſcovy to France. What affair, added I, can he have with Mrs. Cafardo? I ſaw him come out of her room a little while ago. I do not know, ſaid he, as I take no notice of other people's buſineſs; but he has certainly been there to do good for himſelf, or miſchief to ſomebody elſe.

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The thought directly occurred to me, that he must be the Buffoon mentioned in the garden, and, by the apprehension that such a black-hearted villain was plotting against me, I was seized with the greatest horror. Then the advice of the young man at Troyes, which was, to keep myself as far from such people as from the seven mortal sins, seemed to be prophetic; and I conceived such an aversion for them, that, when I heard the least mention of comedians, singers, and theatres, my blood ran chill in my veins. I was in the midst of these thoughts, when a servant brought me word, that the Duke wanted to see me. This jealous husband, thought I, wants to know some news of his wife; but I was mistaken, there was worse for myself. As soon as he saw me, he asked me, in a treacherous tone, if I had no news to tell him? to which I answered, that I had none, in which his Grace had any concern. Then I know more than you, said he; seriously asking me, if I had seen Madam Cafardo? I answered him, that I had; and he replied, I know you love her, and it pleases me to think that you have a return. This friendship is not without some mystery; I can swear, Sir, replied I,

that in my correſpondence with Madam Cafardo, my love had no part. And I can ſwear, replied the Duke, that I do not believe you, and I wonder at your being ſo inſincere with me: I know that, at your age, a ſlip is pardonable; but, dear Richard, when gentlemen make a falſe ſtep, they ought not to forget the debt of a perſon of honour: you underſtand me now! or would you have me explain it more clearly? I do not know, Sir, ſaid I, that I have committed any error that merits this reproof. This is too much, replied the Duke, and really ſo much diſſimulation offends me: how! do you think that I do not know what has paſſed between you and Madam Cafardo, who now finds herſelf ſo unhappy, in having ſuppoſed you a man of honour! on her account I will pardon your youthful indiſcretion, upon condition, however, that you religiouſly maintain your promiſes to her: I have heard, from her, the amorous arts you have practiſed with her, to ſeduce her; but I would not loſe that good opinion that I had conceived for you, by finding you deficient in ſo nice a point: your marrying her will honour you more than ever; and I wonder that it ſhould re-

quire

quire ſo much to make you accept what you ought. I need not ſay I was ſtruck to a ſtatue, and almoſt deprived of my ſenſes; I did not know where I was, nor was able to ſpeak a word. It ſeemed to me impoſſible that her malice could be carried ſo far, and that I ſhould be accuſed of ſo black a crime. What was more eaſy than to prove myſelf innocent? but it would have coſt me a ſecret, that I could not reveal without danger. My trouble and ſilence, in the mean time, were interpreted, by the Duke, for a certain ſign of my guilt: Go, Sir, ſaid he, with a tone of voice adapted to encreaſe my confuſion, go, and think on it: you have heard my intention, and do not make it needful for me to repeat it.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIII.

An extravagant Adventure, by which I discovered the Accomplices concerned in the Plot against myself.

THE time allowed me to give a satisfactory answer to the Duke, was little better than the short respite given to condemned criminals. I shut myself up in my room, where I broke out into many sighs, and such a shower of tears that I could cry, even now, at the remembrance. I was at a loss what to think, what to resolve, what to do! I could publish, said I, the shame of that infamous intrigue which menaces my ruin; but will they believe my words? and where shall I find witnesses for a proof of my persecuted innocence? to justify myself fully, I must betray the secret of my sex; and what will be the consequence, not knowing whose daughter I am? I may, perhaps, be the child of one who would rather have me dead than own me! if I lose the asylum of this court, to what place shall I fly for refuge? and, who knows, perhaps they will not suffer me to leave Paris? These reflections incensed me so highly against Madam Cafardo, the cause of

these

these my fatal troubles, that, in the heat of anger, I would gladly have embraced an opportunity of revenge, even at the hazard of my own life. Despair and anger besieged me in such a manner, that I did not hear two knocks at the door; my lamentations alarmed Mr. Befone, who forced open the door, and entered. What is the matter, my dear lad? said he, throwing his arms about my neck, what extravagancies are these? you are so much altered, that I hardly know you; but, am I not your friend? am I not old enough to be your father? and why do you make a secret of your affliction, when perhaps I am able to relieve you? you still have it in your power to disclose to me the grief of your heart; and be assured, that, at the cost of my own life, I will take part in your troubles as if they were my own. Being greatly moved by these expressions of paternal tenderness, I thanked him with the tears in my eyes, and resolved to discover to him my situation; upon condition, however, that he should observe inviolable secrecy. I then told him all the Duke had said to me; what I had heard from Madam Cafardo in the garden; and whatever else I could tell him, as a proof

of my innocence, without declaring myſelf woman. When he had heard all, See, ſaid he, with horror equal to my own, what a woman is capable of, who profeſſes herſelf a woman of honour! for my part, when I find myſelf under a neceſſity to be converſant with the buſy part of mankind, I conſider myſelf as ſurrounded by aſſaſſins, traitors, and thieves: but, my dear friend, in this caſe, inſtead of abandoning yourſelf to deſpair, you muſt confide in your own innocence, and take ſuch meaſures as are moſt likely to make for your acquittance: you may depend on me, as on yourſelf; and I promiſe you, from this moment, to do all in my power to diſcover who is the unknown gallant of Madam Cafardo, who, by ſcreening himſelf, would bring upon you the conſequence of his crime; from this you muſt unravel the thread of this intricate ſcheme, and clear up your innocence to the eyes of the Duke. I told him, that I had ſome ſuſpicion that the Buffoon, who was mentioned in the garden as the contriver of ſo ſcandalous a plot, could be no other than that Tartar, of whom we had talked tegether that morning. 'Tis not unlikely, ſaid the good old man, he is capable

capable of any thing; but, if it is ſo, you muſt obſerve great caution with him, not to give him the leaſt token of your ſuſpicion, leſt you irritate him the more. I have nothing to do with him, replied I, and perhaps never may have an opportunity of ſeeing him again. Why not? added he, if he is an accomplice in this gang, he will appear as ſuch, and look out for an occaſion to inſinuate himſelf with you, and counſel you to comply with the Duke's deſire: people of this character do not bluſh at their villainy, but are uſed to carry two faces; and that with which they preſent themſelves, is always the liar: if this affair turns to your diſadvantage, he will be the firſt to condole with you on your diſgrace; and, diſcovering your innocence, he'll not be the laſt to give you joy of your good fortune: keep upon your guard, and make good uſe of your prudence. By this time, the hour of dinner drawing near, we went together into the hall. I imagined that Madam Cafardo would not be there, or, at leaſt, that ſhe would not have courage to look me in the face; becauſe, I ſuppoſed that ſhe could not think on the cruel deſign ſhe had meditated againſt me, without bluſhing:

bluſhing: but ſhe had the aſſurance, more than once, to ſpeak to me; and it was with the greateſt difficulty I could ſtifle my rage. All my conſolation conſiſted in the hopes of diſcovering land in time; and in being able, one day or other, to vindicate myſelf. I made not the leaſt doubt but that the Duke had incenſed the Ducheſs againſt me, by telling her of this affair as he thought proper, and giving all poſſible weight to the accuſation; but I flattered myſelf, that ſhe would not condemn me without hearing; and to her I could ſincerely open my heart: in fact, the following day ſhe ſent for me, and I went fully confident of her goodneſs, and my own innocence. Truly, Richard, ſaid ſhe, at ſeeing me, I hear ſtrange things of you, which are not to be wondered at, conſidering the advantages your perſon gives you to make conqueſts: in one thing only I am deceived, which is, that I did not believe you ſo dexterous as to conduct an intrigue with ſo much ſecrecy. Permit me, Madam, ſaid I, to have the honour to tell you, that to me you attribute a talent to which I have not the leaſt title: I find that the Duke has given you an account injurious to my honour;

honour; but, I assure you, Madam, I am innocent: nothing could be more easy, than to justify myself also with him; but I have been willing to spare the reputation of a person who has the honour to belong to you, and does not merit it if she does not spare herself. She has rashly proceeded to blacken my character, and charity ought first to begin with myself. When your Grace shall have heard what I have to tell you, you will judge of the accusations that are against me; and if you find me guilty, I shall not refuse any punishment that you please to assign me.

Here I told the Duchess the same which I had told Mr. Befone, beginning with the adventures of the garden, without omitting those circumstances that rendered my situation deplorable. The Duchess made no great wonder at it; which made me imagine, that, of such like practices of her Maid of Honour, she had already had some proofs. It was natural to imagine, said she, that Madam Cafardo should rather recur to the Duke, than to me; she knows that I am no stranger to her, and that I should not have lent faith so lightly to her complaints. Though I am sorry she has gained my husband in her favour,

vour, becauſe it will not be ſo eaſy to make him change his opinion; nevertheleſs I ſhall ſpeak to him, and, when I find him diſpoſed to believe me, ſhall not fail to make uſe of what you have confided in me. Rely, therefore, upon me; I ſhall do all poſſible to juſtify you. I bowed, and, with my moſt ſincere thanks, took my leave; and went from her chamber to paſs my time in the garden, till towards night, as moſt ſuitable to my melancholy thoughts. And, to tell the truth, many were the reflections which my capricious deſtiny ſuggeſted to me! Was there a woman to be found, in a more unhappy ſituation than mine? but, above all, it gave me trouble, that I could not find out what motive Madam Cafardo could have for uſing me thus; knowing my indifference for her perſon, ſhe ought to foreſee, that ſuch a black calumny muſt render her ſtill more hateful to me: ſhe could not imagine but that, by getting her ends, and becoming my wife, ſhe would alſo become a victim to my juſt revenge and hatred. Then it could not be love that made her act in that manner, but rather rage, jealouſy, and revenge; a baſe, miſchievous temper, that would cry becauſe others laugh,

and

and make herſelf miſerable becauſe others were content! My greateſt concern was, that I did not know how to extricate myſelf from the danger that menaced me from all parts; or how to eradicate the impreſſion which my perfidious enémy's arts had made on the Duke, and diſcover the wretch that had commerce with her, and who wanted to paſs me as the author of his crime. All this was impoſſible without the particular aſſiſtance of heaven, or without running the riſk of revealing my ſex. The night was far advanced, nor could one diſcern any thing, when, in theſe dark thoughts, ſtill walking in the garden, behind a ſort of labyrinth, made of ever-greens, my ears were attracted by the voice of two perſons, who were talking together without the leaſt fear of being overheard: I could neither ſee nor be ſeen, becauſe there was between us a thick hedge: I plac'd myſelf attentively, without moving any farther, for fear of making a noiſe among the leaves; and heard one of them ſay, Now I cannot, becauſe I muſt carry this letter to Madam, and I would give ſomething to read it; if one only had a light, I have the courage to open and read it, and ſeal it up again,

again, without even the Devil finding it out. Here is a light, said the other, taking out of his pocket a pistol tinder-box, on which he struck, and at that instant a light appeared between the leaves. I could then clearly distinguish, that he that had the letter was the villainous Buffoon, confidant to the Duke, and traitor to the person who had entrusted him with the letter, and to the one to whom it was directed. Various reflections came, at that moment, into my mind: I was almost certain that the letter was for Madam Cafardo, and that, from the same, I could find out who was her secret correspondent: this fellow who had the letter, I supposed, acted between them; and that, if I had that letter, I could have discovered their whole plot. Encouraged by these thoughts, I could have faced death that moment, and would have flown to them, sword in hand, to vindicate my cause; but heaven took compassion on me, and made me think of a method less dangerous, and more certain of success: I put my hand to my pocket, and pulled forth one of my pistols, which I had always carried about me; and then thrust it softly between the bushes, and aimed it directly at their light, which stood

ſtood on a marble pedeſtal, on which the traytor had laid the letter while he was looking for ſomething in his pocket to ſeal it. I immediately let fly to the light, and knocked it out with the wind of the ſhot: the noiſe of the piſtols made the two cowards ſcamper off, and leave the letter behind them; I ran round to the pedeſtal and ſeized the letter, which contented me as much as if I had got poſſeſſion of a gold mine, and, with incredible joy, retired to my apartment.

CHAP. XXIV.

Contents of the Letter, and my Diſappointment on reading it.

WHEN I got to my chamber, I looked at the direction, which I found to be for Madam Cafardo; I opened it to look for the name, but found none. The letter was as follows:

" Madam,

I am impatient to know how your Italian withſtood the aſſault from the Duke. Tell me, what ſhall I do, if our ſecret viſits are to be broken? or muſt I ſee you expoſed to the ridicule of the

court? two lines will be ſufficient to acquaint me of your ſituation; but do not let Tartar ſee them, it is not right that he ſhould know every thing. Love me; and I am the ſame ſtill."

I found that this would juſtify my innocence, and prove fatal to Madam Cafardo; yet I was ſorry that I did not know who wrote it. I have, ſaid I, compaſſed the moſt important point; the remainder will be managed with leſs difficulty. With this conſolation I went very chearfully to ſupper, wiſhing for an opportunity to take Mr. Befone into my room, and give him a narrative of what had paſſed.

When we were alone, I informed him of my adventure, and gave him the letter to read; but he no ſooner ſaw the letter, than he cryed, Ah! my dear child, you are entirely loſt! Terrified with this, I aſked him the reaſon? he told me, that the hand-writing was that of the Marquis of ****, nephew to the Duke, and that he knew the writing as well as his own. In what an unhappy affair are you embarraſſed! this letter is an evident proof of an intrigue between the Marquis and Madam Cafardo; and if you offer to juſtify

tify yourſelf to the Duke, it will only increaſe his anger, becauſe he would not have the reputation of his nephew blaſted in ſuch an affair, though he knew that he was in the fault: and who knows, but what the Duke himſelf may be a party in this plot, and would have you ruined to cover the ſcandal of his houſe?

I aſked Mr. Befone, what he would adviſe me to do? I would have you, ſaid he, go to the Ducheſs; ſhew her the letter; and tell her, that you would not ſhew it the Duke, for fear of incenſing him againſt the Marquis: by theſe means, the Ducheſs, being convinced of your innocence, will always be your advocate with the Duke. I promiſed to obey him; but had no opinion that this would be of any ſervice to me, knowing, better than he, the ſecret reaſons which the Ducheſs had, not to break with her huſband. Mr. Befone then took his leave of me for that night; and the day following he came to me, deſiring me to go and dine with him at the houſe of a relation of his, where we found very agreeable company. I promiſed my readers to be ſincere, even in my failings; and intend to keep my word with them. At that dinner, I drank

a little more than I ſhould have done; but there was a moſt agreeable young lady, called Miſs Gianetton, whom Mr. Befone had known a long time; and after dinner, to divert her, he played ſeveral airs on the flute, whilſt ſhe accompanied him with her voice; and I, being a little elevated with the liquor, did the ſame. My friend was ſupriſed at my capacity, and complimented me on the ſweetneſs of my voice; the reſt of the company did the ſame; and there was now no excuſe for me, but ſing I muſt, as much as they pleaſed. The applauſe that I received from all, was incredible: they ſung almoſt all the airs of an opera, in which Miſs Gianetton had her part; and we did not break up till towards night. When we were got home, and were ſate down to ſupper, Madam Cafardo ſeemed more diſcontented than uſual, and I attributed the cauſe to the loſs of the letter which was fallen into my hand: it was not unlikely that Tartar, to excuſe his own perfidy, would endeavour to make her believe it to be loſt; becauſe he had been ſeen by her, ſeveral times, ſeeking about the garden, as if he had been looking for ſomething which he had really loſt.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXV.

Advice given to me by the Dutchess; and my Conjectures of having found my Mother.

THE next morning the Dutchess sent for me, and I had great hopes that she had some good news to communicate to me, having been informed, by the messenger, that the Duke had that moment left her chamber. On my coming into the room, Do you know, said she, that the Duke has just left me, and has not spoke one syllable about you? I protest, that the more I think on the conduct of Cafardo, the more I am astonished; and she certainly must have the most consummate assurance, to carry things to this excess. I do not know, Madam, answered I, by what base motives she is actuated; but give me leave to tell your Grace, that I can now give you the most convincing proofs of my innocence. I then put into her hand the letter from the Marquis, which she read with surprize and wonder. Here is no reply to this, said the Dutchess; I could never have believed, that any woman could have gone such a length: the thing is clear, but I

do not ſee that you can make any uſe of it: it appears to me, that the Duke is no ſtranger to this intrigue of his nephew, and therefore he abſolutely reſolves to make you marry Cafardo: if this ſhould be the caſe, it will be almoſt impoſſible to make him change his opinion; nor can I give you any reaſon to hope it: be adviſed by me, in theſe difficult circumſtances; when the Duke ſends for you, to know your anſwer, ſubmit yourſelf, ſeemingly, to his will; but beg, as a favour of him, that he would give you time to be aſſured of her being with child; and that, when you are aſſured of that fact, you are ready to marry her, only in appearance, without obliging yourſelf to live with her as a huſband: you will find that the Duke will be content with this; and when he thinks he has prevented any ſuſpicion of the intrigue between his nephew and Cafardo, he'll then take no further advantage: if it has no other effect, you will gain time; and, by gaining time, you will have ſome hope remaining. She then ordered me to go to a particular place, to ſee if there was any letter from the Prince, who was a little indiſpoſed; and I brought one, in which he told her, that

that the next day he ſhould be out to take an airing. It will readily be believed, that my intimacy with Madam Cafardo was at an end, after ſhe had treated me in this manner. Oppreſſed by the infamy ſhe had brought on herſelf, ſhe ſeldom left her chamber, as, perhaps, ſhe feared my juſt reſentment; though, as much as I was irritated againſt her, I could not help pitying her ſituation; and feared, that her remorſe would make her commit ſome deſperate thing, that might diſhonour her ſtill more. Thus my heart, compaſſionate by nature, ſpoke to me in her favour; but, whatever it ſaid, when I thought on her failing, and on her being with child, I could not juſtify her in my own heart, which prized honour more than life itſelf. The Duke allowed me eight days to reſolve on an anſwer. I had a good and able counſellor in Mr. Befone; and all the remedy we could find, was, to keep to the advice the Ducheſs had given me, and wait the event. At the expiration of the time limited, the Duke ſent for me. Well, Sir, ſaid he, have you thought on that affair? if you chuſe to have my good opinion, you know how to merit it. Judge, Sir, ſaid I, whether I deſire it

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or not, when I tell you, that I am ready to obey you, and accept of Madam Cafardo for wife: but, I beſeech your Grace, to give me time to be aſſured of her being with child; and in the mean time, if you pleaſe, our marriage ſhall be in appearance only. I don't know, added the Duke, if ſhe will be content with thoſe conditions; though, I muſt own, the favour you aſk cannot well be denied: I will repreſent the caſe to her, and as her honour will be thereby ſecured from the attacks of ſcandal; ſhe may, perhaps, be ſatisfied; however, you ſhall know further to-morrow. The anſwer was, that Madam was content with this appearance, for the preſent; upon condition, that I ſhould keep my word when the time came, and that the Duke himſelf ſhould be ſecurity for my performance of the contract. Matters being thus concluded, it was, in a few days, rumoured, through all the court, that I was married to Madam Cafardo; and I received the compliments of all parties accordingly. Was not this a ſubject for a comedy, the moſt whimſical that ever made its appearance on any ſtage? At this early time of life, woman as I was, I had had two wives: the firſt was a comfort, the other

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a horror to me; and even she, by her sincere repentance, would have disarmed my anger, if other accidents had not happened, which rendered my heart, though naturally tender and compassionate, entirely averse to her. After the publication of my nuptials, I never spoke to Madam Cafardo, unless it was in company; where, being obliged to dissemble, the part was a pleasure to me, and to her the greatest torment: neither of us exceeded the bounds of simple civility; I, because I would not; she, not for want of inclination, but, because she had not courage to do otherwise. She did not omit, however, to give me, continually, the most sensible proofs of tenderness; hoping, by degrees, to calm my just resentment: a day did not pass, without her sending me some present; she did not dare even to look up at table; every glance of her eyes was accompanied by a profound sigh, and, I may also say, with some tears.

This mute language proceeded from either her repentance, or her love, which touched me much; and there were moments in which I felt compassion for her. I did not fail to give information to the Duchess of what passed; and she, who

who had a heart ſtill more tender than mine, thought Madam Cafardo was ſufficiently puniſhed by the remorſe of her own conſcience: Mr. Befone alſo told me, that, as the condition remained inviolable, not to aſſociate with her as a huſband, I could and ought to treat her with more charity. So much perſuaſion was unneceſſary, becauſe my heart already pleaded in her favour; and if ſhe had had the courage to break ſilence, her excuſes would not have been badly received; nor would I, being the party offended, be the firſt ſo to do. Thus we continued for ſome days, only to look ſilently at each other; at length, over-powered by the tenderneſs of my nature, I reſolved to be the firſt; and, it being her birth-day, I got up from bed with this intention; when ſhe prevented me, by ſending me, by a footman, a bunch of very fine flowers upon a ſilver ſalver: ſuch favours I had, at other times, received from her; but, under the flowers, there was one of another ſpecies, that I ſhould not have expected, and which again put my ſpirits in freſh confuſion. This was a letter from her, which I opened for curioſity to ſee how ſhe would juſtify herſelf: but, alas! how was I ſurpriſed, when,

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on seeing the writing, I knew it to be like, nay it was in the very same hand with which the two letters were wrote from my mother, received by me in the convent at Avignon, which I had carefully preserved: I immediately searched for them, to confront them together, and found there was not even the difference of a letter.

My thoughts were so confounded, that I knew not where I was; not doubting in the least, from the similitude of the hand-writing, but that Madam Cafardo was my mother: but, alas! what sort of a mother did I find in her? Unhappy me! said I, to myself; I no longer wonder at her cruelty to others, when she is so inhuman to her own child, whom she would, by force, have shut up in a cloyster: such a mother might well plot against my honour, who had dishonoured me even from my birth; and if her present pregnancy is a crime, that also must have been a crime which gave me life: it is for this cause, the perfidious mother has concealed herself even from her daughter: for this, she would bury me in solitude, to hide, from the eyes of the world, the horror of her crime: I had been happier

pier never to have known her, than thus to know her only to my ſhame! The myſtery of my birth, it is true, had always foreboded me little good; but the bad conduct of which I was certain Madam Caſardo had been guilty, exceeded my worſt apprehenſions. One falſe ſtep in a woman well born, might ſeem pardonable in the eyes of the world, and of heaven, when it can, perhaps, be juſtified by a thouſand indiſpenſable circumſtances; but a ſeries of repeated falls, like thoſe of Madam Caſardo, would admit of neither pardon, or excuſe. I rather choſe to remain an orphan, abandoned, and unhappy, than confeſs myſelf daughter to ſuch a mother!

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVI.

My Conjectures of having found my Father.

IT is now time to inform my readers of the contents of the letter which was wrote to me by Madam Cafardo; and which were as follow :

" Dear Sir,

I am ſenſible, that whatever comes from me, ought to be, in your eyes, an object of horror; but bear with me, one moment only, and you will have your revenge. Your diſlike to me is very trifling, in compariſon of my fault; very great are the continual ſtings of my agitated conſcience; and my crime is ſo great, that it muſt be expiated only with my blood. You ſhall not, much longer, be troubled with the ſight of my odious perſon; for I am reſolved to withdraw myſelf from the eyes of all the world: but as I cannot, even in ſolitude, obliterate the dear remembrance of you from my mind; I am determined there, by my own hands, to put an end to my miſerable life. I ſhall die contented, if you, thereby, have your revenge; and you, in ſuch caſe, will be very inhu-

man to deny me your pardon. As I expect nothing but this from your goodneſs, in order to the execution of my deſign; ſhould you deny me this favour, to make me die contented, heavens pardon you the fault of rendering more miſerable my untimely end, I am, &c.

CAFARDO.

I read this letter more than once; and it produced in me more compaſſion than reſpect. When I reflected that thoſe who are capable of one extreme may be equally ſo of another, the deſperate reſolution of Madam Cafardo gave me ſome diſmal apprehenſions. As I thought her life in danger, and, whatever fatal imprudence ſhe might be guilty of, was unwilling to have the cauſe of it laid to my charge; I flew to her apartment, and found her in a ſituation not leſs deplorable than ſhe had deſcribed in her letter: I found her ſitting in a melancholy poſture, all undreſſed, and neglected; her eyes ſwollen with tears. At firſt ſight of me, ſhe ſtarted up, as if ſhe had been ſeized with an unexpected mixture of joy and grief; ſhe ran to meet me, and, falling at my feet, ſhe embraced my knees,

knees, ſobbing and crying ſo loud, that ſhe might have been heard in the ſtreet. I was perplexed to ſuch a degree, that I almoſt repented my coming. No, dear Sir, ſaid ſhe, I deſerve nothing but your hatred; and if I have deſired your pardon, that is enough, without your honouring me ſo highly with your preſence: I have ſtained my own reputation, and contaminated yours; the horror of my crime increaſes in proportion to your goodneſs; and your goodneſs, at preſent, ſtings me more than any thing elſe: by the emotion in your countenance, I am ſenſible that you feel ſome compaſſion for me; and if you have pity for me as your enemy, let me die by your own hand, and teach me how revenge is to be taken: no, my dear Sir, I will not depart from your feet, unleſs you will take this ſatisfaction, which I dare not give you of myſelf, through the fear of diſhonouring you ſtill more: kill me with your own hands, that ſo I may die glorious, rather than live diſhonoured; and your life will become agreeable, as you would rather die a thouſand deaths than become my huſband: what more do you wait for? would you have me arm your hand for revenge? I have courage to

do it, as I am abſolutely reſolved on death— So ſaying, ſhe ſtretched forth her arm to take the ſword from my ſide; but I took hold of her, and, in lifting her from the ground, ſaluted her twice. Overcome by my ſubmiſſion, ſhe fell into ſuch exceſſive grief, that I was afraid ſhe would have fainted in my arms: No, Madam, ſaid I, you ſhall not do violence on yourſelf: why ſhould not I pardon in you a fault, which proceeds from your ſincere regard for me? it is ſufficient, that you remember upon what condition I have accepted your hand, and that you are ſatisfied that we ſhall live together as if we were brother and ſiſter. Ah! Sir, replied ſhe, even this is too much for me; I am ſo far from deſiring that you ſhould conſider me as a wife, that, at preſent, and for ever, I beſeech you to conſider me as one of your very humble ſervants: all I have in the world, is at your command; but I wiſh for nothing of yours, except to have the honour to obey you: your correſpondence with me is abſolutely neceſſary, to preſerve my reputation; but if even this offends you, I care not what happens to me, provided you are content. She ſaid a thouſand other things, which might have appeaſ-

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ed the rage of a favage; and our diſcourſe would not have ended without my declaring myſelf her daughter, if another accident had not happened, which kept me, more than ever, at a diſtance. The letters from Paris arriving, one was brought to her, which ſhe received with joy, ſaying, immediately after ſhe had read the direction, this comes from Avignon. My heart jumped into my mouth at theſe words, and I changed colour; but Madam Cafardo did not obſerve it, becauſe, on reading the letter, ſhe found motives therein to diſturb her more than me. The alteration in her face was ſo perceptible, that I ſuſpected, immediately, what it was; and which increaſed my fear. As I was near her, I ſaw, immediately, it was the writing of the governeſs of the convent of Avignon: the interrupted complaints which ſhe made at not receiving it ſooner, perſuaded me that the letter had remained neglected, a long time, at the poſt-office; and her confuſion only, made made me believe, at laſt, that it brought an account of my flight. There was no more occaſion to doubt that Madam Cafardo was actually my mother; which required the greateſt intrepidity in me,

not to fall in a ſwoon, with fear, at her feet, and betray myſelf. She had hardly read the letter, than ſhe got up, and aſked my leave, ſaying, that it was neceſſary for her to carry that letter to the Duke, as it concerned a daughter of his. I freely conſented, wiſhing to be alone, that I might be able to make more ſerious reflections on what I had heard and ſeen. Oh, miſerable me! ſaid I, in my heart, that letter brings an account of my flight; and, by what I underſtand from Madam Cafardo, I now know my father! nor do I at all wonder that he intereſted himſelf ſo much in favour of Madam Cafardo, as in her he protected a miſtreſs: but what impiety is this, that the uncle and the nephew ſhould both be guilty of a criminal correſpondence with the ſame woman! what ſort of a woman muſt this be, whoſe paſſions make her trample the laws of heaven and nature under her feet! of ſuch an unworthy paſſion, I am then the unhappy fruit; born into this world for my ſhame! .... Madam Cafardo, my Mother! the Duke, my Father! .... what felicity, upon earth, can a miſerable child hope for, born of parents ſo unworthy of the bleſſings of heaven?

Ah!

Ah! I already see the dreadful sentence wrote above, that I am born to be for ever unhappy! woe to me, if the Duke knew who I was! he, who is so unjust to make me take upon me the shame of a fault committed by his nephew, will be to me a tyrant, seeing before his eyes, in my person, the image of his own crime: no, from him I can expect nothing but persecution, injustice, and cruelty, if he should ever find out that I am his daughter; which he certainly will, either sooner or later, if I forbear to withdraw myself from a place, that may be as dangerous to my life, as it has, hitherto, been to my honour. Full of these melancholy ideas, I should have immediately flown from that court, and from all France, if gratitude for the Duchess had not persuaded me to do it in such a manner as should not give her any trouble. With these reflections came others not less important, which obliged me to change my thoughts: After I had given my word to the Duke, and Madam Cafardo, to appear in character of her husband, how could I obtain leave to absent myself from that court, without irritating both, and drawing upon my head some worse misfortune! Here I lost all prudence,

dence, my ſpirits languiſhed, nor did I know of whom to take advice: my virtue alone ſupported me, or rather my philoſophy, perſuading myſelf to preſerve more caution than ever, to diſſemble with all, and to wait for a remedy from the combination of events, and the accidental circumſtances of time.

CHAP. XXVII.

The Court goes to Verſailles. A Misfortune happens to the Prince.

ALTHOUGH Madam Cafardo had given me many proofs of being ſincere with me, but few minutes had paſſed when I had new motives to ſuſpect her. She had told me, that ſhe was obliged to go and communicate the letter, from Avignon, to the Duke; but I found, afterwards, that from my chamber ſhe had gone directly to the Ducheſs, and had tarried with her above two hours. Having occaſion to ſpeak to the Ducheſs ſoon after, I found her more thoughtful than uſual, and much out of temper. This was a new myſtery to me, and added to my former doubt, whether Madam Cafardo had told me the truth, in ſaying, that the

the fugitive from Avignon was daughter to the Duke. During this my perplexity, the court left Fontainbleau, and went to Verſailles. This was a new world to me, where every object appeared wonderful: I never, in my life, ſaw a more delightful place, nor ſo ſuperb and magnificent a building. We no ſooner arrived at Verſailles, than the Ducheſs inſtructed me where to carry and receive letters to and from the Prince; this was the firſt, if not the only thought, that engroſſed her attention. By ſome means or other, the Duke had a ſuſpicion that I was privy to this correſpondence, and his confidence in me decreaſed every day: I could not help ſuſpecting this, though I never could arrive to a certainty, as he was too cunning to let his thoughts be perceived; but the conſequence convinced me of it, and it is but ſeldom that I am deceived in my conjectures. I did not, at that time, take any great pains to come to the bottom of it, as the pleaſures of Verſailles diverted me more than uſual, and, by little and little, introduced me to the great world. The firſt faſhionable vice into which I launched, was that of gaming; which was the principal, nay the ſole occupation

tion of every one there. From what I had obſerved in others, I had ſufficient motives to take an averſion to gaming: it is begun as a diverſion, and generally terminates in a downright profeſſion: how many are deceived into it at firſt, who, afterwards, make it their ſtudy to live by deceiving? I, every day, ſaw theſe examples; but found few that could profit by theſe my reflections. While I was thus cautiouſly taking my diverſions, and profiting in the ſchool of the world, Madam Cafardo, who continued firm in her love for me, adviſed me of her ſuſpicions, that the Duke was not pleaſed with me, and that ſhe could not penetrate into the reaſon of it. I imagined that the Ducheſs muſt have known, and had recourſe to her; but ſhe proteſted ſhe knew nothing of it. But I ſuppoſe, ſaid ſhe, that the Duke pretends to be angry with you, to reduce you, by fear, to marry, in reality, your pretended ſpouſe.

Who could have imagined what a barbarous deſign he was meditating againſt me? however, I was not the firſt victim to his jealous fury: but to induce the reader to believe him capable of ſuch cruelty, it is neceſſary firſt

I ſhould paint his character in a proper light.

The Duke of **** was, in his ſtature, little: in perſon, pretty fat, full of malignant humours, which the want of exerciſe occaſioned, owing to his being ſo very fat: he was almoſt always ſitting at a little table in his ſtudy; and, becauſe he was ſhort-ſighted, very often ſat without any light. This continual thinking, and working with his brain, had weakened his head in ſuch a manner, that he was frequently troubled with the vertigo. He paſſed, with every body, for a man of refined policy: but his policy was not always regulated by honeſty; he loved money, and he would put a hundred devices to work to ſave a few crowns. He was a moſt refined maſter in the art of diſſimulation; and would deceive people with a ſmile on his lips, whilſt, in his heart, he was meditating their death: extreamly credulous, and fanciful, he would make a body of every ſhade; and of every accidental word, a myſtery. It may eaſily be ſeen, that to guard againſt a man of this character, without firſt knowing him, was very difficult; and I myſelf did not know him, till it was too late. I carried, one day,

day, a letter to the Ducheſs from the Prince, in which he ſignified, that, by order of the King, he was to depart, that ſame night, for Paris; and that he was to return two days after: in fact, he departed that night; and, the next morning, it was rumoured over all Verſailles, that he lay at the point of death. It is impoſſible to deſcribe the rage and deſpair which the Ducheſs gave into at this melancholy news; and my affliction was not leſs than hers, according to the obligations I had to ſo amiable a Prince, whoſe life I would have preſerved at the coſt of my own. I could have no peace for this cruel accident; the common account of which was, that he, having departed from Verſailles in a poſt-chaiſe, with his valet and one footman only, had been attacked, four leagues from Paris, by four men, maſked, armed with blunderbuſſes; that his two ſervants were killed on the ſpot, and he himſelf was very dangerouſly wounded; and that the poſtillion, who had the good fortune not to be wounded, had, by dint of hard galloping, brought the Prince from out of the hands of thoſe murderers; who, having followed in vain ſome miles, at laſt turned back. Thus

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the fact was related in general; but the advice which the Prince sent to the court, calmed our grief, by letting us know, that he was only slightly wounded in the arm, and that he hoped to be in person, in a few days, at Versailles. The court ordered the most diligent enquiry to be made, to find out the authors of this enormous attempt; but it was all in vain. The Duchess, who was much interested in that misfortune, but dared not vent herself only in my presence, let slip some words, from which I could comprehend, that she laid the fault upon the Duke, her husband; and, to tell the truth, my conjectures were not different from hers. The Duke, notwithstanding, shewed signs of affliction for the misfortune of the Prince; and, on that occasion, professed more love to me than usual. If we were not generally blind to the vicissitudes of our own destiny, I ought then to have been certain, that the Duke held me as an accomplice in the correspondence between the Prince and the Duchess, and that some misfortune also threatened me; this, in fact, was not far off, as will appear in the subsequent chapter.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Neceſſity of my Departure from the Ducheſs.

BEING under a neceſſity, one one night, us uſual, to fetch a letter from the Prince to the Ducheſs, I had deſired Mr. Befone to wait for me, at a little diſtance from the place: I had but juſt entered the ſhady walk, when I was aſſaulted, ſword in hand, by two villains, whom I immediately knew to be the ſame from whom I had taken the letter in the garden at Fontainbleau, directed for Madam Cafardo: knowing what cowardly wretches they were, I couragiouſly raiſed my voice, and, pulling out one of my piſtols, I let fly at one of them, and would have done ſo with the other, but my ſecond piſtol only flaſhed in the pan; and one of them advancing, made a thruſt at me, which, not being in my power to parry, wounded me in the left arm: I clapped my hand on my ſword, reſolving to defend myſelf to the laſt, but expected nothing but death (though one of them was alſo wounded) if Mr. Befone, at the report of my piſtol, had not come up to my defence: ſeeing me

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in this danger, the good old man ruſhed on the two villains ſword in hand, and wounded them both at the firſt two thruſts: they did not ſtay for the ſecond, but took to their heels. Mr. Befone being anxious about my wound, which ſeemed to him worſe than it really was, bound it up in the beſt manner he could, and, making me reſt on his arm, conducted me back to the palace: he alſo knew the two perfidious villains, and declared to me on the way his ſurprize, ſuppoſing that they had found out that I was the perſon who had taken the letter from them at Fontainbeau, and that this was their private revenge; he imagined ſo, becauſe he was ignorant of the ſecret reaſons which the Duke had to hate me; but I was obliged not to mention thoſe two infamous murderers, becauſe they depended on him; and for many other good reaſons.

The court was ſoon informed of what had happened to me; and this affair occaſioned much talk: every one went to Mr. Befone, to be minutely informed of the circumſtance; and the lovely Ducheſs took the firſt opportunity to fly ſecretly to my apartment, to be ſatisfied of the ſtate I was in; and being aſſured that the wound was of but

little moment, ordered me, in the firſt place, not to ſtir out of my room; but Madam, anſwered I, as a favour I beg it, that you will not deprive me of the honour of ſerving you, in ſpite of all the world; I well know that all this is on your account, but, when I know it favours your intereſt, death will alſo be glorious to me. I am obliged to you, ſaid ſhe, for your generous ſentiments; but, as much as you are diſpoſed to ſacrifice your life for me, ſo much the more ought I to engage to preſerve it: if you move out of the houſe, I ſhall be in continual fear; and for which I order you not to ſtir, if I am not firſt certain that you can do it with ſafety: I do not know what all this means, and when it will end; but here are two horrible facts, one on the back of the other, which put me under the moſt dreadful apprehenſions. Before the Ducheſs came, the Duke had ſent his ſurgeon to viſit me; and though my wound gave me pain, I refuſed to go to bed, as Mr. Befone inſiſted: and I make not the leaſt doubt, but that every one will eaſily gueſs at my reaſon. The diſſimulation of the Duke was not new to me, but however it did not fail of ſurpriſing me; that night I had not courage to

cloſe

close my eyes; and, oh God! what were my reflections, my fears, and my torments! at day-break Madam Cafardo returned to me, who had been with me the preceding night, and lamented at seeing me up so early: how many merks did she give me of her tenderness, and displeasure? I had strong reasons to suspect the Duke, and she gave me to understand, that her conjectures coincided with mine, by believing him an accomplice and author of this my cruel misfortune: However this did not induce me to discover my mind. My greatest security in that court, consisted in being diffident of every one; but having many doubts which I was desirous of clearing up, I dextrously drew her into discourse. From the subject of my misfortunes, she passed to that of the Prince; and here it was that I asked her, what reason the Duke could have to attempt, as she supposed, his life? I will tell you, said she; the Prince was in love with the Duchess, and he was tenderly beloved by her, before the Duke was married: she is, by birth, an Italian; her parents conducted her very young to court, where they made a very great figure; she grew up, as I may say,

with the Prince, and with him was educated; ſo that, according to their reciprocal inclinations, they had deſtined her as his ſpouſe: the court interpoſed to break this marriage, and policy alone, which is the arbitrator and tyrant of the great, obliged the parents of the Ducheſs to give her in marriage to the Duke, who, for his age, might be ſuppoſed her father inſtead of her huſband: this marriage was to her a ſacrifice that had very near coſt her her life. The Duke, in the firſt month of his marriage, was ſent an ambaſſador to the court of Madrid, and the Ducheſs, by the pretext of her indiſpoſition, prevailed upon him to leave her in Paris: you may very well imagine, that her tenderneſs for the Prince, inſtead of being leſs, increaſed in the abſence of her huſband. Six months after ſhe was married, and five only after the departure of the Duke, ſhe, unexpectedly, took it in her head to go to Madrid, and in a few days we were obliged to get every thing in order for her departure: what was the reaſon of this unexpected reſolution, I am very well acquainted with, though I ought not to mention it; nor ſhall it ever be known. In Spain we did not arrive ſo ſoon, becauſe ſhe would firſt make an excurſion into

Italy;

Italy; and, being obliged by her indiſpoſition, which accompanied her all the way, ſhe ſtopped almoſt two months in Rome, entirely private, and, I may ſay, that even the air itſelf did not know it. The reſt of the family were ſent by ſea; with her, there were none but me, and Madam Fralle her other maid, with whom ſhe afterwards parted, becauſe, ſhe pretended, that the Duke, her huſband, had a daughter by that woman. We were hardly got to Madrid, when ſuch difference aroſe between her and the Duke, that, from that time, they have lived in the manner you now ſee. By this narrative, I got a little inſight of the matter, nor could I have dared to promiſe myſelf ſo much. If the reader goes through theſe memoirs, he will ſee, that Madam Cafardo had not told me all; but ſhe confeſſed that, to conceal a ſecret known only to her, ſhe might not ſay any more. I no longer doubted but thatt his was the Princeſs of whom Duli had ſpoken; I knew by him that ſhe had been brought to bed in his houſe, of a daug t er;; and this account of the ſuppoſed indiſpoſition of the Ducheſs agreed with what Madam Cafardo had told me. Thus far did not ſeem a little in regard

to

to myſelf; but as Madam Fralle, the Ducheſs's maid, was diſcharged by her becauſe the Duke had a child by her, it ſeemed to me as if I had found a mother in her. The Duke, thought I, had a daughter by Madam Fralle; this daughter, according to all appearance, is run away from the convent of Avignon: then I am this wretch; and I can now ſay, that I know who are my parents. I looked upon the force of this argument as invincible; and though of my birth I had nothing to glory in, yet, knowing that Madam Cafardo had no part whatever therein, it made me leſs unhappy. A very great doubt however remained, which gave me no little trouble; if Madam Fralle was my mother, how could the letter, wrote to me by my mother when I was at Avignon, be the ſelf-ſame hand-writing with that of Madam Cafardo? of which there was not the leaſt doubt. To gain a farther light in this intricate affair, which I could not get only by means of Madam Cafardo, I aſked her, as if by accident, what became of Madam Fralle? ſhe told me, that the Duke had married her to a dependant of his, and that four months ago ſhe died in child-bed. By this I knew nothing more than before; though

though I imagined, that, not to give her husband any suspicion, she had got somebody to write for her; and that she made use of Madam Cafardo rather than any body else, she being acquainted with her fault, and enjoyed the favour of the Duke, from whence it was natural to think my maintenance came. Upon the whole, I did not know how to go further with my conjectures; but such as they were, they gave me no consolation. What did it avail knowing who was my father, if, in my father, I found a tyrant, who, perhaps, repented of having given me life, and was now menacing my death? This and the like reflections, prevented me from enjoying any peace of mind in that family, and made me resolve to get as far off as I possibly could: I wanted a pretence to leave the amiable Duchess, without giving offence, and this I thought I had found; in consequence of the misfortune that had befallen me, I could bring for an excuse, the continual danger I was in there of my life: I communicated my thoughts to Madam Cafardo, who, truly loving me, was in more terror than me, and who was not wanting, in her advice, to contrive for my safety. For charity, said she, put

an end to my fears, and to my tears; retire from a place so fatal for you, nor let the Duke know to what part you are gone: though your absence will be pain to me, yet, knowing you are in safety, that pain will be alleviated: do not fail writing to me, and any thing you desire me to do, shall be punctually accomplished: fly; begone, as soon as possible; every moment you stay is a torment to me: for I think I see those murderers in search of you. Madam Cafardo's good persuasions were also joined by those of Mr. Befone; and they found no great difficulty in persuading me to depart from the court, for I thought I should be in continual danger till I left it: yet I well knew, that, in the present circumstances, the Duchess would have occasion for my assistance; and, to prevent any other person, in my place, from betraying so good a mistress, it was absolutely necessary that I alone should carry on their correspondence.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIX.

My Departure from the Ducheſs.

AT the end of ten days my wound was ſo well healed, that I found myſelf able to undergo the fatigue of a journey. I went, very early in the morning, to the Ducheſs's apartment, and, throwing myſelf at her feet, with tears in my eyes, begged of her to permit me to quit her ſervice; that not only my life was in danger, but her ſecret correſpondence with the Prince, ſhould they aſſaſſinate me at a time when I had any letter of hers in my hands, might be diſcovered; which would occaſion the fury of the Duke to fall upon her likewiſe: now, Madam, ſay yes, or no: if you order me to ſtay, I ſhall obey your commands, willing to loſe a thouſand lives, was it in my power, for ſo amiable a miſtreſs: command me, Madam; for to die in your ſervice, will be an honour to me. No, dear Richard, replied the Ducheſs, I ſhould never forgive myſelf, ſhould you loſe your life in my ſervice; and ſhould for ever upbraid myſelf for being the occaſion of your death: for me you have already ſuffered enough, and

and it would be ungrateful in me to let any further miſchief happen to you on my account: Go; though your departure will be a continual concern to me, heaven, I hope, will forgive me, for parting with you in ſo hard an extremity: tell me, however, where are you going? and what is your deſire? for it will be a pleaſure for me to ſee your merit rewarded; and I will aſſiſt you to the beſt of my ability. This generous offer, and the thoughts of Italy, where the Count was, gave me an opportunity of telling her, that I deſired to return to my friends in Italy, in a creditable manner, that they might not ſay my journey to Paris had proved to my diſadvantage. Well, ſaid the Ducheſs, the Marſhal of ****, who commands the French army, is now in Italy; when you leave this place, you will call at Paris, and I will give you a letter for the Prince, who will recommend you to the Marſhall, with whom he is intimately acquainted; and, without doubt, you will be advanced in the army. She immediately ſat down to write me the letter: while ſhe was writing, the thoughts of advancement ran but little in my head; what I aimed at was, to ſurprize the Count when he leaſt

leaſt expected the ſight of me. When the letter was finiſhed, ſhe preſented it to me, and embraced me with a motherly tenderneſs, calling me, more than once, her dear child, and ſaid, ſhe always loved me as a mother, not as a miſtreſs. On leaving the Ducheſs, I viſited Madam Cafardo, to let her know of my departure the following day. She told me, that ſhe was glad of it, notwithſtanding her love for me; thinking that,, as long as I continued there, my life was in danger. She ſhewed me all her money and jewels, and told me, that it was all at my ſervice. Not having occaſion for any, I told her I was obliged to her: but ſhe inſiſted upon my acceptance of two hundred Louiſd'ores, and told me, whenever I had occaſion for more, to ſend to her, and I ſhould have them. I returned her thanks for her bounty, told her I had thirty thouſand livres, and that I would depoſit in her hands the half, and that the remainder would be ſufficient to travel with: I took my leave of her, and then waited upon the Duke, though, in my heart, I had a moſt juſt reſentment againſt him, and dared not ſhew it. His obliging terms did not ſurpriſe me in the leaſt; know-

ing very well, that he would profeſs a concern for my leaving the Ducheſs, though, at the ſame time, he intended my death. Sir, ſaid he to me, you are juſt going at a time when I thought to recompenſe you, becauſe I knew that the Ducheſs had a great eſteem for you. And for that reaſon, thought I, you have taken a diſlike to me, and recompenſed me accordingly, in ſeeking to get me aſſaſſinated. Are you going to Paris? ſaid he: yes, Sir, replied I; but will not ſtay long there, leſt my enemies of Verſailles ſhould follow me there. Do you know them? ſaid the Duke; yes, anſwered I, or I am wrong in my conjectures; but when an enemy conceals himſelf, we have need of greater caution, and the perſon that ſeeks to take away my life, I doubt, is not far off: I could have ſaid more, but was afraid it would occaſion my own ruin. I then left him, and went to Mr. Befone, who detained me the remainder of the day: he proteſted that he envied my condition; and that he would alſo follow my example, if he could recover twenty thouſand livres which were due to him, and which he would not make a preſent of to the Duke; but if he ſhould happen to get it, that

the

the Duke might provide himself with another Gentleman, for he would not die in this family after having lived so long discontented with them. We afterwards talked about the method in which we should conveniently write to one another, without being discovered: I reflected, that keeping a correspondence with that court was impossible; and supposing myself the Duke's daughter, my character would be known, when my letters should be confronted with them wrote by me, from Avignon, to my mother: on the other hand, I could not but write to Madam Cafardo; and to do it with security, it was necessary I should find some expedient. Mr. Befone had by him a copy-book, from which any one might easily learn to write in a variety of different hands, and insisted on my taking it; this I with pleasure accepted, and, after the most sincere protestations of reciprocal friendship, we parted. Early next day I set out for Paris, and immediately waited on the Prince, who was surprised at seeing me. His surprize ceased on reading the letter, in which the amiable Duchess recommended me with the warmest affection. The Duchess, said he, had no occasion to

write ſo ſtrongly in your favour, when your good ſervices have already ſpoken enough for you: I would provide for you a place in my own apartment, if I did not apprehend, that, for ſhewing you this diſtinction, the Ducheſs would be reflected upon by the Duke; but I will give orders to my Gentleman to provide you with a genteel lodging, and every thing elſe that is neceſſary you: I know your deſires; and you may think yourſelf, from this moment, appointed to a poſt in the army. I then made him a low bow, and went with his Gentleman into a coach which brought us into the High-Street, and ſtopped at a gentleman's houſe, where a very handſome apartment was provided for me. My intention was not to ſtay long at Paris, but, while I did ſtay, I every day paid my viſit to the Prince; and then, through curioſity, and for amuſement, generally took a turn about the city.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXX.

New Motives for my leaving Paris, and going to Italy.

DURING fifteen days that I tarried at Paris, my uſual walks were towards the royal-palace gardens. One day, as I was coming from thence, I met with two ladies whom I had ſeen ſeveral times before: they aſked me, what it was o'clock? I pulled out my watch, and told them it was paſt ſix. Bleſs me! ſaid the oldeſt of them, it is very late, niece; it is time we ſhould be at home: upon this, ſhe looked at me from head to foot, as if ſhe had known me before, and ſaid, Sir, I hope you will excuſe the liberty I take, in aſking you, if you are not Mr. Ruſſant? I anſwered, that ſhe miſtook. Then, replied ſhe, you are certainly ſome relation of his, for you reſemble him very much. By that time we arrived at the garden-gate, where a coach waited for them; I handed them into it, and they begged that I would come in alſo, and accompany them home. The coach ſtopped in a ſtreet of which I did not know the name, nor the way to it again: we went up to an apart-

ment on the ſecond floor, where they profeſſed themſelves greatly indebted to me for company, and inſiſted upon my ſtaying to ſup with them; and the niece, not leſs than the aunt in her ceremonies, prevailed on my ſtaying. I then ſat down to a ſupper, which was delicate, but not very grand, and I do not remember that ever I was in more agreeable company: they drank a great deal, and would have perſuaded me to drink more; but I remembered wine had made me play the fool before, and it ſhould not the ſecond time. At eleven o'clock I got up to retire home; and they aſked the footman if the coach was ready? who anſwered, yes; and lighted a torch immediately. He walked before me; and I had hardly got twenty ſteps down, when the light was put out, and I was attacked by two ruffians, who crammed a handkerchief in my mouth, and ſtripped me of all that was of any value: they then turned me into the ſtreet, and ſhut the doors againſt me. As ſoon as I found myſelf at liberty, for fear of a ſecond aſſault, I ran as faſt as I could out of the ſtreet; when unhappily a conſtable met me, and, ſeizing me for a rioter, immediately conducted me to priſon. Oh! heavens,

heavens, with what inquietude did I pafs that night! every minute feemed a day: Juft heaven! faid I, am I born to be for ever unhappy! At laft the day appeared, and I was carried before the Judge, who terrified me with his looks. I began to juftify myfelf; but he, with a frown, bade me be filent, and anfwer to what was afked me. He would know who I was, my name, country, relations, profeffion, and age; he told me, that he fufpected I had committed fome murder in the night, and then fhewed me my fword, afking me, if I had not made ufe of it? I anfwered, no. He drew it out of the fcabbard, and it was all bloody; he then enquired the reafon of its being fo? but I could make him no anfwer. No accufation could be falfer, or more apparent than this; he imputed my filence to a confciouſnefs of guilt; I had nothing to teftify my innocence, but named the Prince, my protector. Upon this the Judge faid, do you know the Prince? to which I anfwered, yes; and if he would pleafe to let me have pen, ink, and paper, I would write a line to him: he granted it, and I wrote as follows:

" Dear

" Dear Sir,

I have taken the liberty to acquaint your Highneſs, that I am in danger of my liberty and life. That Unhappy, who has the honour to proteſt himſelf,

Your moſt obedient Servant,

RICHARD.

The Judge diſpatched the billet by a ſervant, who in an hour returned with the Prince, at the ſight of whom my accuſers trembled. He ſpoke to me with an obliging familiarity ; ſaying, confeſs the truth, have you ſlain your rival? do not be frightened, it is in my power to get your pardon. I related all that happened to me ſince he ſaw me laſt; and when I had told the whole affair, the Judge ordered me to be acquitted, upon condition that the Prince would be anſwerable for my appearance, if neceſſary. I then went with the Prince to my own lodging, he told me, that that court of Juſtice, and Judge, depended entirely upon the Duke, and that it was proper for me to leave Paris as ſoon as poſſible. The next day I did not fail to wait upon him at his own palace, as he had ordered me ;

me; he presented me with another gold watch of greater value than the former, with one hundred Louisd'ores, and a letter for the Marshall of * * * *, his particular friend. Go, dear child, said he, by presenting to him this letter, you will be appointed a Captain in the Burgundy regiment; if you stand in need of any thing else, write to me, and you shall have it immediately. On my parting with the Prince, I thought my heart would have burst with grief: we embraced each other as father and son; I was indeed his daughter, but heaven would not permit either of us to know it that time. I desired him to present my duty to the Duchess, when he should see or write to her; and we parted with tears in our eyes. Thus am I upon the point of leaving Paris to go to Italy, and again destitute of friends, relations, or company; left to myself, in the hands of an extravagant destiny, a fugitive from Avignon, flown from the prosecution of an unknown and cruel mother, and unfortunately fallen into the hands of one whom I suppose to be my father, and who desires my death, and forces me from Paris at the hazard of my life. Oh! had I but known what was to happen,

or

or whom were my parents, I ſhould not then have left two of the moſt amiable and deareſt of parents, ſo worthy of my love, in ſearch of whom, had I known them, I would have gone to Paris from the utmoſt confines of the world. Whoever reads this, and the ſubſequent part of theſe my memoirs, will confeſs, that I was born to be a ſlave to fortune, and utterly at a loſs amidſt the moſt prudent reflections.

CHAP. XXXI.

My Impriſonment in the Baſtile.

ON the day fixed for my departure from Paris, I had got every thing ready for my journey; but the inclemency of the ſeaſon, and the heavy rains, obliged me to defer ſetting out till the next week. I went every day to ſee the Prince, as uſual; and one morning, when the rain had ceaſed, I went to take my laſt adieu of him: but how was I ſurpriſed when the ſervant informed me, that, at twelve o'clock that night, he went in a poſt-chaiſe, with an officer and a footman, to Verſailles, as they ſuppoſed. I immediately judged that ſome extraordinary news from the Ducheſs occaſioned his ſudden depar-

departure. I went back to my lodging, resolving that day to leave Paris. But when I came home I found a coach at the door, and in the hall an officer that waited for me. I asked him, with a trembling voice, what was his business with me? Pray, Sir, said he, is not your name Signior Richard? I replied, yes. He then shewed me a written order to apprehend me where ever he found me; nor had I courage to ask him the reason, but was obliged to step with him into a coach which was shut all round, and drove to the gate of a prison, where another officer received me, and conducting me through a long passage, at last shut me up in a room by myself. Here was I in the most deplorable condition; and, with tears in my eyes, cried out, Oh! cruel fate, will you never cease to torment me! am I to be for ever prosecuted, and for ever unhappy? I am no sooner out of one prison, but I I am hurried into another: what crime have I committed to deserve this usage? how many times have I lamented leaving my charming solitude in Avignon! what have I suffered, and how much am I yet to suffer? In the midst of these reflections, I was interrupted

rupted by the approach of a man who brought me ſome proviſion; but my ſorrows would not ſuffer me to eat. The place I was in, I ſuppoſed to be for people of diſtinction; the floor was covered with a handſome carpet; there was alſo a large window that gave ſufficient light, but was ſo very high that I could not look out from it; the bed was midling, and the walls were adorned with pictures: a companion, or a book, would have diverted my melancholy thoughts, but, deſtitute of either, I reſigned myſelf to the will of heaven, and reſolved to fix an entire dependance on Providence, which alone could enable me to ſubdue the greateſt afflictions; and my greateſt ſatisfaction was, that I had not committed any crime. In this diſmal ſituation, three weeks paſſed without my ever hearing human voice, or ſeeing any perſon, except him who brought me neceſſaries; and who I thought was dumb, for he ſpoke not one word the whole time. One night I was awakened by a noiſe againſt the wall, at the head of my bed; I ſtarted up with fear, and, liſtening attentively, heard a voice which ſeemed to be at a diſtance, and called me by my name. Terrified with the

voice,

voice, which I thought came from ſome ſepulchre: I looked round the room, but could ſee nothing; and was doubting whether I ſhould anſwer it: noiſe increaſed, and I could hear it ſay the very diſtinctly, Mr. Richard, what are you about? Upon this I took courage, and replied, very loudly, that in health I was very well, but in ſpirits much troubled. Don't be afflicted, replied the voice; the Prince of * * * * bids you to be of good heart. At the name only of the Prince, my ſpirits revived; and I aſked the voice, what world it belonged too, and whether it was in the number of the living or dead? I am alive, replied the voice; and have been kept here theſe ſix years. I then aſked him, what place they called it? he told me, it was the Baſtile. How then, ſaid I, do you know that the Prince deſires me to be of good heart? I heard him, ſaid he, by the ſame means that you heard me; he is in the next room to mine, and was brought here half a day before you; and all that renders his ſituation better than ours, is, that he has got a ſervant to attend him, and we are alone. I bade him to aſk the Prince, what occaſioned this misfortune, and to tell him, that his condition ſat more

heavy upon me than my own; and that, if it was poſſible, I would hazard my life to deliver him from his confinement. The voice replied, that he would ſerve me immediately, and we would talk about it the next day. So ſaying, I tried to ſleep, but could not; the Prince's confinement was worſe to me than my own; I ſuſpected no one could be the author of this baſe uſage but the vile Duke; as for myſelf, I could have pardoned him; but, for the ſake of the Prince, I could willingly, at that moment, have ran him through the body with my ſword. The next day I was carried before the Secretary of State to be examined, who, after he had asked me ſeveral queſtions, deſired to know my correſpondence with the court of Alemaign? I anſwered, that my age did not permit me to have the honour to know any body in that court, and that I could give a ſafe oath to the contrary. The reſolution with which I ſpoke theſe words, perſuaded the Secretary of my innocence; and his pleaſant countenance embolden'd me to beg the favour of a book, to divert my tedious hours: he readily granted it, ſaying, I might have whatever I pleaſed. When I went back to my room, the

keeper

keeper asked me, if I liked company? to which I anſwered, that we were born for ſociety, and that I liked it, if it was agreeable. Well then, ſays he, you have a neighbour in the next room, and I will leave the doors open, that you may be together all day, if you pleaſe.

CHAP. XXXII.

The Hiſtory of a Learned Man I met with in the Baſtile.

MY readers will readily believe that my keeper had no occaſion to perſuade me to go into the other room; the moment I ſaw the door open, I flew into it, and embraced my new companion, who, with incredible joy, ſaid, Is it poſſible, that after a ſix years mournful ſolitude, I have, this day, the pleaſure of your company! Theſe words baniſhed the thoughts of my ſhort impriſonment, and all other misfortunes; we immediately agreed to dine together; and at my expence, I ordered four bottles of Burgundy, and at the ſame time gave the keeper a preſent. Janneſon, which was the name of my new comrade, no ſooner heard me ſpeak of Burgundy wine, but his

heart leaped for joy; before we dined, I called out loudly for the Prince, who, hearing my voice, answered me. I told him of my examination before the Secretary of State, and how I answered him; he replied, that he was informed of all, and bade me be of good heart, for that in a few days we should be at liberty. This good news made me keep good cheer with Janneson, who, at the sight of the four bottles of Burgundy, ran to meet them, saying, this room is now turned into a wine-cellar, and if I could get such good cheer every day, I should be content to stay here all my life. His comical expressions, during dinner, diverted me much. After dinner, he must needs tell me the principal adventures of his life, and, taking a large glass of wine, went on as follows:

Do you know, said he, *imprimis & ante omnia*, that France was once my country? but having nothing there belonging to me, I can say, that my country is all the world; a head full of Greek, Hebrew, and Latin, was all the patrimony left to me by my parents. The prejudice of the Protestant religion, sucked in with my milk, made in me the strongest impressions: I took a voluntary

luntary farewell of my native country, and ran away to Switzerland, fixing my reſidence in the Proteſtant canton of Berne. In a ſtrange country, without protection, without employment, without Friends, and with very little money, through want of neceſſaries, and for an honeſt maintenance, I was obliged to have recourſe to my natural talents, which I had cultivated with extreme attention, I directly commenced author, and had ſome of my works printed; here, from morning till night, I was continually writing; the work I did not mind, becauſe I gained by it, and met with applauſe from thoſe who read my works; but this was not my aim, for to live there wanted money, not applauſe; and I never read of an antient or modern philoſopher, who, to gain praiſe, would be content to die with hunger: tho', I thank heaven, I had no occaſion to be diſcontented with my livelihood; but in the moſt ſerious reſolutions we are inconſtant, and a thing out of ſight ſhould be out of mind: but come, let us leave theſe morals in my books, in which there are plenty — Here he took another glaſs of Burgundy; and then proceeded: The love of my country made me long

to see Paris, and I have gained much by coming to see it; curse the day that ever I came into it, I wish the horses legs had been broke that brought me; fifteen days did not pass before I made acquaintance with a wine-merchant's daughter, who seemed to my eyes most beautiful; and being of an age when reason gives way to inclination I was in a few days, mad with love. The father of this beautiful damsel did not make me languish long; for no contract could be sooner established than mine was, though it is a merchandize that a person should take more time about than I did. You may think that œconomy in expences is a very necessary virtue in the wife of one who writes for his bread; but she would not hearken to this discourse, and, not to have the devil to pay in my house, I was obliged to keep an elegant table, and to see consumed in one day, as much as cost me the fatigue of a whole year; and if I had been able to have wrote ten times the quantity, it would not be sufficient to defray her extravagant expences. Human ingenuity is like the ground, which does not give fruit every day; and when it does, the produce must have time to ripen: an author, to

convert

convert his works into cash, must depend upon others; and when they gain a favourable sale amongst the public, the bookseller must have the first share in the profit: by this you must think, that the writer does them for a trifle; to persuade my wife of this truth, was putting the house in an uproar; she made the bill before they were concluded, and spent the price of them before I received it: if I spoke about affairs of the house, she tore every thing that was in her way; I was therefore obliged to be silent for fear of worse: in one word, Sir, if a person desired revenge on another, they need only wish him a wife of this stamp: at last, tired of writing without profit, I frequented a coffee-house to avoid quarrels at home, and it was my perverse fortune to fall in company with some news-mongers, and politicians, which is a dangerous trade, especially in war-time: I picked up all they said, turned news-writer, and undesignedly let something slip out which aggravated the government: they sent an officer to my house to pay me a visit when I least expected him, he made me rise out of bed at the break of day, and, putting me into a coach, conducted me to the Bastile, where I have

have been six years, and have the honour of eating the King's bread, without being troubled with books, or plagued with my wife: I am, it is true, deprived of my liberty; but I have the pleasure of being quiet: the world I know what it is, and do not desire to be in it for fear of having my wife at my side again, from whom I would go a mile under ground: here I can eat without thinking of any thing; and if I had a flask of Burgundy every day, I would present a petition to the government to keep me here all my life: if Plato himself was in my case, he would do the same. With these and the like discourses Janneson diverted me every day; but our maxims were different, and I had other motives to desire my liberty. In a few days the Prince was released, and, before he went out, assured me, in person, that he would shortly procure my liberty: notwithstanding which I remained there two weeks longer. I was, tis true, permitted to take the air with my comrade upon the top of the Tower, from whence I could see all Paris; but this sight to me was a new torment: if I had set out two days sooner, thought I, nothing of this would have happened, and I

should

ſhould have been with Count Termes; but heaven would not permit it; and for what is paſt there is no remedy.

CHAP. XXXIII.

The Viciſſitudes of Fortune after my Releaſe from the Baſtile.

AT length the time came when heaven was pleaſed to deliver me from my impriſonment, and the good Prince contributed not a little to haſten it. Before I came out, I gave Janneſon ſome linen, and twelve piſtoles. In going out, I met, at the foot of the ſtairs, the Prince's Gentleman, who took me into a coach, and conducted me to my own lodging, where I was received with much joy. I would immediately have paid a viſit to the Prince, but they told me, that when he came out of the Baſtile he went directly to Verſailles. I was receiving the congratulations of the family, when Madam Cafardo and Mr. Befone came in: the ſudden joy of ſo unexpected a viſit, drew tears from our eyes; though my joy was conſiderably abated, by Madam Cafardo's adviſing me not to acknowledge publickly that ſhe was my wife: this occaſioned in my mind freſh ſuſpicions, and I deſired

fired to know her reaſon for it: ſhe told me, a Chevalier, whoſe name ſhe did not remember, was with the Ducheſs at Verſailles, ſoon after my commitment to the Baſtile, who ſeemed very much diſpleaſed at my impriſonment; and that this was the reaſon of her deſiring me to keep it ſecret, leſt it ſhould be a diſpleaſure to this my relation, as ſhe ſuppoſed he was. I could not conceive who this was, though Mr. Befone gave me alſo a particular deſcription of him. In the mean time we diſcourſed about the Ducheſs, and they told me, that, after the Prince's impriſonment, ſhe was ſo diſguſted with the Duke, that ſhe would ſee him no more; that the Prince every day, ſince he was acquitted, went to pay her a viſit, and that the Duke took no more notice of it; Madam Caſardo likewiſe told me, that there was a project in agitation, which, if known, would make a great noiſe in the world. After this ſhe gave me a letter from the Ducheſs, full of the moſt tender expreſſions; in which ſhe deſired to ſee me before I left Paris. I was reading this letter when a gentleman knocked at the door, and enquired for me; the ſervant informed him that I was engaged in company, and that he did not know whether

whether I would chuſe to ſee any body at that time. Be aſſured, replied the ſtranger, that your maſter will be glad to ſee me. I, hearing theſe words, and knowing the voice, ran to the door: Oh, heavens! how rejoiced was I ſee my dear friend Mr. D'Arcore; he ſqueezed me by the hand, ſo overcome with joy that he could not utter one word; and ſo great was my ſurprize, that I was almoſt ſtupified myſelf, and could hardly believe my own eyes: I aſked my generous friend, if I had not been the ſole occaſion of his flying from Lyons in order to my aſſiſtance? He told me, he had read of my being put into the Baſtile, in the Gazette at Lyons, and that he immediately came to Paris to give me a character, if requiſite; that he made all poſſible intereſt with the Governor of the Baſtile, but could not get admittance to ſee me; he then flew to the Ducheſs, at Verſailles, who told him, that my fate ſhould not be worſe than it was; and that he would not leave Paris till he ſaw me at liberty. Where could I find expreſſions to return him thanks for his benevolence? could generoſity or friendſhip do more than this? I already had given orders that we ſhould dine all together; during dinner,

dinner, Mr. D'Arcore kindly upbraided me for not having wrote to him but once ſince I left Lyons: this really was a crime that could not admit of excuſe; but my ſex are ſeldom at a loſs for one, and I told him, that as I deſigned to call at Lyons very ſoon, I would not trouble him with inſignificant letters, and intended to ſurpriſe him when he leaſt thought of me: the excuſe was paſſable, but I had no ſooner drawn myſelf out of one net, than I was caught in another: then, replied Mr. D'Arcore, I will take you at your word; to-morrow I am going to Lyons, and you can bear me company: here I was puzzled how to anſwer, but Madam Cafardo brought me off, by ſaying, Sir, this is impoſſible, for my miſtreſs, the Ducheſs, deſires to ſee him at Verſailles: to this he made no reply, for my waiting upon the Ducheſs was indiſpenſable: I was alſo indebted to pay the Prince a viſit before I left France, that he might renew my recommendations for Italy; and Mr. D'Arcore could not defer his journey one day longer. We ſtayed at table till almoſt night; the next morning he went for Lyons, and we for Verſailles. Gratitude, reſpect, and, I believe, nature, directed my firſt ſteps towards

wards the Ducheſs; ſhe related to me all that had happened ſince I had left her, and ſaid, that, upon the Prince's and my impriſonment, ſhe had left the Duke; and, if it was poſſible, would get a divorce, having juſt motives to ſeparate from each other. Believe me, ſaid ſhe, this is not owing to the heat of my temper, or the blind tranſports of an amorous paſſion; I have long thought, and am continually thinking of it; and that you may be convinced how much I confide in you, you are the only perſon that can aſſiſt me in this difficult undertaking; and it is neceſſary that you go from hence to Avignon, to tranſact ſome buſineſs for me, of which I will inform you to-morrow.

At the name only of Avignon my blood ran cool in my veins, and it was a difficult point for me to conceal from the Ducheſs my agitation: I anſwered her, however, that I ſhould be diſpoſed for immediate performance of her orders, and that it would be an honour to me to ſerve her. I could not help ſuſpecting that it was ſomething concerning myſelf, and had almoſt aſked her what it was about; but, upon reflection, I thought it moſt adviſeable for me to enquire of Madam Cafardo, who,

I ſuſpected, knew of every thing. The Ducheſs, more than once, told me, that, as I had ſuffered ſo much for the Prince, he would, aſſuredly, make my fortune; ſhe aſked, if I ſtill perſiſted in my reſolution of going to Italy? I anſwered, yes. Well, ſaid ſhe, we ſhall ſee one another again; in the mean time, I will think of what I can do for you. Who would have imagined that the Duke, after ſo much ill-uſage, would fain have perſuaded me that he was ſtill my friend? he kept me above an hour in his apartment; and ſpoke to me ſo open-hearted, deſiring me to come and lodge in his palace, that it was a difficult matter to avoid accepting his offers, which I judged prejudicial to my life and liberty. The thoughts of the journey, projected to me by the Ducheſs, was conſtantly in my mind; I took the firſt opportunity to ask Madam Cafardo, if ſhe could give me any light in this affair? I can, replied ſhe, and I will tell you, in a few words, all that I know about it: this journey, to the Ducheſs, is of the utmoſt conſequence; ſhe being diſguſted ſo much againſt the Duke, wants to ſeparate herſelf from him: I informed you before, that the Duke had a child

by

by Madam Fralle, waiting-maid to the Ducheſs, and this child is the foundation of her ſcheme of ſeparating from the Duke: this girl has been left in Avignon to be educated, without being permitted to know who were her parents: within theſe few months ſhe has eloped from Avignon, and, if ſhe cannot be found, this ſcheme of the Ducheſs will prove abortive: you are to go to Avignon in ſearch of her, and, if ſhe is not there, you muſt come back to teſtify that ſhe has been there, that ſhe is ran away, and is not to be found: the thing is eaſy for you, being a certain truth which cannot be doubted, for ſhe has been there ſix months ago; but, oh Ducheſs! I can almoſt foretell what will happen in this caſe: the Duke, finding himſelf attacked in this manner, will abſolutely defend himſelf, and it will be no difficult matter to deny a fact that is but now firſt publiſhed; therefore this will be of no prejudice to him: thoſe who ſeek, very often find what they little expect; and ſhe, in trying to diſcredit her huſband, will only diſcredit herſelf.

Theſe reflections, anſwered I, are very juſt, and I wonder you do not mention them to the Ducheſs herſelf,

to drive such dangerous thoughts from her mind: Madam Cafardo said she had, but from her mouth they did not prevail, the Duchess supposing that it was fear dictated them. Do you try, said she, if you can prevail with her; but I doubt it, because she never told you all that is past; nor can you speak to her like me, because I know what you do not. To this, said I, I cannot answer, for there are secrets that the women never will betray; when once they have entertained an opinion, it is hard to remove it; and the disgust she has to the Duke will never be at an end. Madam Cafardo was, at that instant, called away to the Duchess; and I returned to my apartment with a mind oppressed with melancholy, and the most painful reflections on what course I should pursue.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXIV.

Commiſſion received by me, from the Ducheſs, to go to Avignon; and, after that, to Italy, in ſearch of myſelf.

THE ſituation I was in, to any one, except myſelf, muſt have appeared really diverting: I was the fugitive of Avignon, and was to go in ſearch of myſelf; the Ducheſs loved me with the tenderneſs of a mother, and yet I was to be the ſole executrix of her juſt revenge: theſe comic ideas, far from giving me pleaſure, made me no longer doubt that I was daughter to the Duke; yet I wondered, as the Ducheſs knew of this conjugal infidelity of her huſband, that ſhe did not reſent it before; at the ſame time I thought, that not to execute this commiſſion of the Ducheſs, would be abuſing her bounty, and merit her diſdain for ever; and to obey her orders, would be the ſame as to diſcover myſelf, and lay open to the world, the ſtain of my birth; in ſhort, I could not find out a better method than to make off, without the privacy of any one, from ſuch an intricate and ſubtil court. In oppoſition to this reſolution, there were, in my heart,

ſome ſentiments of regard towards the Ducheſs, which I could by no means account for; nor did I know whether it proceeded from conveniency or nature: I thought, if I treated her amiſs, it would be ungrateful; and if I acted otherwiſe, it would be cruel to myſelf. Confuſed between theſe two ſentiments, of love and gratitude, I knew not which part to take; at laſt my doubts were reduced to two points, whether I ſhould manifeſt myſelf to be what I really was, or take frankly the journey for Avignon, and wait the change and circumſtances of time: having to do with a man like the Duke, it might coſt me my life; and to diſcover myſelf to the Ducheſs, would be diſcloſing a ſecret as dear to me as my life: I then reſolutely reſolved to do neither the one nor the other; and contented myſelf with hoping that the Ducheſs's reſolution might be diſapproved by the Prince, and her opinion, by his perſuaſions, changed. In the mean time ſhe ſent for me, and I went as if I had been going to execution. You muſt, ſaid ſhe, at the firſt word, diſpoſe yourſelf for departing; I will give you ſome letters to the governeſs of Avignon, and for others of my dependents, of whom

you

you muſt inform yourſelf, what is become of a young girl, called, Miſs D'Arville, who is mentioned in the letters: ſhe is, though you are a ſtranger to this matter, daughter to the Duke, who had her by one of my waiting-maids, after he was married to me; nor can I ſeparate myſelf from him till I can produce this girl, or at leaſt teſtify, by witneſſes, that ſhe has been there, and is gone off: but take care, when you are in Avignon, not to mention my name in this affair; and regulate yourſelf by what the people, whom I write to, ſay to you. All is well, Madam, anſwered I, I ſhall not fail of performing your orders; but to ſatisfy your inclinations, muſt you make ſo much noiſe in the world! are you not ſeparated already? and do you not live as you pleaſe, without any one's daring to reflect on you? This is not ſufficient, replied ſhe; my honour is at ſtake, and I am deſirous that my ſeparation from the Duke may be juſtifiable in the eyes of the world, and properly authenticated: thus being at liberty to marry whom I pleaſe, I ſhall alſo be able to diſpoſe, at my diſcretion, of all my wealth, which is ſuperior to that of the Duke.

At the time I write this, I cannot but wonder, that even in the nobleſt ſouls, vile intereſt will ſometimes predominate: in a ſentiment ſo mean, I think the Ducheſs not worthy of an excuſe; I, that was ſo much inferior to her, ſhould have been aſhamed to expreſs myſelf in that manner. While ſhe was telling her mind, I was thinking what method I ſhould take: it was lucky for me, that ſhe allowed me fifteen days before I was to ſet out, in which I thought I could reſolve what to do.

From the Ducheſs's apartment, I went to the Prince: he received me with his ordinary civility, aſking me, how long it was ſince I had ſeen the Ducheſs? I told him, I had juſt left her; and that ſhe was talking about a journey for me. I ſuppoſe, ſaid he, it is that of Avignon; and, upon my honour, I believe the Ducheſs is going out of her ſenſes: ſhe would fain make herſelf eaſy, and is taking a method to augment her troubles; but I dare not oppoſe her opinion: if ſhe deſires you to go, you muſt go; but as you do not ſet out theſe fifteen days, poſſibly, in that time, ſome accident may happen which may make her change her mind.

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Could I have entertained ſuch hopes, I ſhould not have haſtily taken a reſolution which coſt me ſo many tears; and might have coſt me my life. What I require of you, ſaid the Prince, is, that, if you ſhould go, you manage, in Avignon, the affair of the Ducheſs with the utmoſt delicacy: I am already ſufficiently perſuaded of your zeal and diſcretion towards my intereſt; and therefore ſhall acquaint you with ſome matters, to which you are a ſtranger. I imagined, that I had known more than him in this caſe; happy would it have been for me, had I not truſted too much to my own knowledge: my curioſity was always of ſervice to me; but on this occaſion I was not at all curious, becauſe I was to be ſtill unhappy: could I have had patience to wait for the Prince's inſtructions, I ſhould not have formed a reſolution, than which I never made a worſe in all my life: my temper was ſuch, as I have obſerved before, that, in the heat of my paſſion, no reflection was able to withhold me from a reſolution once taken.

No ſcheme could be more imprudent or more reſolute than mine, when I determined to leave Verſailles, and Paris,

Paris, without acquainting any one of my intentions, at the hazard of affronting two perſons who could have found me where ever I went; and who, on ſuſpicion of my diſcloſing what they had revealed to me, muſt certainly have deſired my death: nevertheleſs, I judged that ſuch a ſtep was neceſſary for me, and this ſeemed to me reaſon ſufficient; and, in order to execute it in the manner my circumſtances required, I procured a paſs-port, and a poſt-chaiſe, under pretence of going to Paris for two days only; and, in the duſk of the evening, I mounted my chaiſe, with all my baggage, and, without bidding adieu to any one, ſet forward on my journey. I took the road for Italy, with an intention not to paſs by Lyons, leſt the news of my flight had reached that place. I had letters of recommendation from the Prince to the Marſhall of * * * *, that commanded the French army in Italy; and I truſted they would anſwer my purpoſe, becauſe I intended, when I arrived at Piedmont, to write to him by another perſon, and implore, from his generoſity, my pardon: to gain it, thought I, will not be difficult; and Madam Cafardo will not fail to ſpeak in my favour.

vour. The Ducheſs, deprived, by my abſence, of the inſtrument of her intended revenge, will ſurely give over all thoughts of vindicating herſelf; and it would be more grateful in any one to intercede to her for my pardon, than to exclaim againſt me: the worſt they could impute to me was, either that I muſt be the daughter of the Duke, or, that I had only been diſobedient to their order; which was a matter of indifference to me, when I might perhaps never ſee them more. Theſe reflections encouraged me to leave Verſailles; and whatever happened to me afterwards, I reſolved never to blame my own conſcience for it. No one, at court, could know of my flight, for the ſpace of two days after; and then I ſhould have no occaſion to trouble myſelf about their conjectures.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXV.

My Departure from Paris, and the Conſequences thereof.

WHEN I had got about forty leagues diſtance from Verſailles, the axle-tree of my chaiſe, by a ſudden jolt, broke in the middle; and while the poſtilion was repairing the damage, a gentleman on horſe-back rode up to me, and alighted from his horſe to aſſiſt me; but ſeeing that it would take ſome time to put it in order, and that it was impoſſible for me to arrive at Valenciennes before night, he kindly offered me ſuch accommodation as his houſe afforded, and which, he told me, was not above the diſtance of a muſket-ſhot from that place, and promiſed, in the mean time, to get my chaiſe mended as it ought to be; and to-morrow, ſaid he, you may proceed on your journey. This obliging offer, to a perſon in my circumſtances, could not fail of being agreeable; and though his appearance gave me no very favourable ideas, he expreſſed himſelf with ſo much civility, that I could not refuſe his invitation. His head was covered with a wig, which looked like ſpun-yarn;

yarn; his coat was ſerge, of a Frier's grey, which ſeemed to have been turned ten years ago; his waiſtcoat was laced with gold, but looked older than himſelf; his breeches were grey linen; and, in ſhort, between his own figure and that of his horſe, there was little difference; for, the horſe looked as poor as himſelf. We walked together a conſiderable way, and, at laſt, arrived at a long valley, from whence I could diſcover Mr. Alliot's houſe, which was not higher than a hay-ſtack. I do not conduct you, ſaid he, to a Louvre, or to Verſailles; but to the houſe of a poor gentleman, where you ſhall not want a good bed, nor any neceſſary refreſhments. With ſuch like diſcourſes we arrived at his houſe. In truth, he told me no lye, in ſaying that he did not conduct me to the Louvre, or to Verſailles; for his yard was full of dirt, and lumbered with ſtraw; and I ſcraped my ſhoes, to go into a room full of rubbiſh: on my entry, I was complimented by Madam Alliot, who, turning to her huſband, asked him, if he was not aſhamed to bring me into ſuch an incommoded houſe? Soon after, his nephew came in, with a large parcel of woodcocks, quails, and other

game, which he had killed that afternoon, and which, being dreſſed, afforded us an elegant ſupper. At the proper time, we retired to reſt; and early next morning, my chaiſe being ready, I took my leave of Madam, returning her a thouſand thanks; nor did I ſuſpect that Mr. Alliot would accompany me, but he inſiſted that he would, and we arrived both together at Valenciennes; from whence we proceeded to the famous abbey of St. William; and Mr. Alliot, as if he had been maſter, gave orders to unharneſs the horſes, and put them in the Abbot's ſtables, and then deſired to ſee the Abbot: when he came out, Mr. Alliot made him a very low bow, telling him, that he was charged to accompany that young gentleman (meaning me) to ſee the moſt curious places in the province, and that he thought it his duty to ſhew him the famous abbey of St. William; therefore hoped to be excuſed for this liberty. The courteous Abbot replied, that it was doing him a particular favour; and immediately conducted us into a genteel apartment, when he offered us ſome refreſhment. No, no, replied Mr. Alliot, we'll keep our ſtomachs for ſupper, and we ſhall not then be in danger

danger of doing wrong to the generosity of our hoſt; and, while the ſupper is getting ready, we will take a walk in your garden to gain us an appetite. Gentlemen, ſaid the Abbot, I will keep you company. We are obliged to you, replied Mr. Alliot, but don't diſturb yourſelf, nor us neither. Though Mr. Alliot's diſcourſe was quite free and unpoliſhed, it was ſo natural, and accompanied with ſo much affability, that no one could take it amiſs.

CHAP. XXXVI.

My Arrival at Turin.

MY companion, after leaving me ſome moments in the garden, returned, ſaying, that we ſhould have an elegant ſupper, for there were two diſhes which the Abbot was very fond of; and if the cook did not dreſs them properly, the Lord have mercy on him. In truth, we had a fine ſupper; and Mr. Alliot aſſured me, that he would engage I ſhould be more elegantly entertained the next day. To this I replied, that I muſt abſolutely depart the next day, and proceed on my journey. There is no occaſion for ſuch hurry, ſays he; here is plenty of the beſt pro-

viſion, and nothing to pay for it but good words. This ſort of œconomy did not agree with my ſpirit; but I had to do with a man from whom I knew not how to diſengage myſelf. At length, however, I found an excuſe to depart in two days from the Abbey. I thought, if I left it without ſhewing ſome token of my gratitude, I ſhould ſeem ungenteel; and therefore I took occaſion to ſpeak to the Abbot alone, and preſent him with a gold ſnuff-box, given to me by Mr. D'Arcore, and which was worth about ſeventy ducats. The œconomy of my companion, on this occaſion, made me prodigal; and although my liberality might exceed proper bounds, I ſhould have rather been quite poor, than have ſhewn myſelf mean-ſpirited, or acted ungratefully. In the evening we arrived at Mons, and I feigned to go to Bruſſels the next morning; by this means I got rid of Mr. Alliot, who returned to Valenciennes. Before I ſet out on my journey, I wrote a letter to Madam Cafardo; in a character copied from Mr. Befone's book, that my true hand-writing might not be diſcovered: I gave her the reaſon of my ſudden departure; deſiring her to find out the ſentiments of the Ducheſs concerning

cerning me, and to write to me at Turin, without informing any one where I was I would willingly have wrote to Mr. D'Arcore, but was fearful of being discovered, and determined to defer it till my arrival in Italy.

From Mons to Turin, nothing happened worthy of attention. The situation and beauty of that city, I will not say it surprised me, but it pleased me extreamly: if there were not not magnificent palaces, as in Paris, and in other cities of Italy, yet the spaciousness of the streets, and regularity of the buildings, exceeded what was to be seen in other places. I took a lodging with intent to stay some time at Turin, that I might get an answer from Madam Cafardo, to know what was said of me at that court. Being one night at the opera, I went into the stage-box, and was surprised at being saluted by one of the singers as if she had known me before: I could not, by her face, find out who she was; till I rose up, and went from my box to the scenes, when, coming nigh her, I knew her to be Miss Gianetton, Mr. Befone's friend: I was surprised to see her in that way of life, neither had she time to tell me any thing, but desired the favour of my company when the opera was ended.

Accordingly I went to the door to wait for her; and when she came out she took me by the arm, as is common with ladies of her profession, and made me step into the coach, which conducted us to her house. A distinction of this nature made every one believe that I was a favourite of that beauty, and had made a conquest of no little moment: I heard an observation of this sort, as we were going into the coach; at which she laughed, and I, in my own mind, had more reason to laugh than she. I shall say nothing of her apartment, only that it was compleatly furnished; and before I had the honour of being noticed, I must wait till she undressed at her leisure, to give me an opportunity of seeing her wardrobe; and, under pretext of washing her hands, she shewed me her toilet, which was adorned with a variety of silver trinkets: if she had spared this trouble, it would have done her more honour; wealth of this sort, procured in so short a time, I suspected, must have been got in no very creditable manner. After having given me this ostentatious display of her riches, which certainly were not the fruits of a rigorous virtue, Miss Gianetton insisted on my staying to sup with her, and entertained me like a Prince:

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at this I did not wonder, as I well knew that people of the theatres were generally very extravagant. That air of feigned greatneſs, which they aſſume on the ſtage, is not forgot when on plain ground; and in domeſtic converſation, they aim to mimic their ſuperiors, with a contempt for all others, which renders them truly ridiculous. Miſs Gianetton was not old in the art, yet ſhe had adopted all theſe prejudices, as if ſhe had been of the profeſſion from her childhood. When ſupper was over, I took my leave of her, and the next morning my pretended conqueſt was rumoured all over Turin.

The idle life which I led at Turin, in waiting for the letters from Paris, made me conſider the converſation of Miſs Gianetton, and the talk of the country, as a paſtime, which a little flattered my vanity; I continuing to viſit her, ſhe continued to diſtinguiſh me. whether it was through the affection which ſhe conceived for me (as I afterwards found) or with the hopes of gaining advantage, as the women of her character do, by being ſo intimate with me, ſhe tormented me in ſuch a manner with her kindneſs, that ſhe would not leave me one hour's liberty; I paſſed whole days at her

her houſe, becauſe it was delightful, and her converſation lively; and becauſe I had no other acquaintances there, every one envied my happineſs, and at their envy I laughed; but had I foreſeen what was to happen, I ſhould have had little cauſe to glory, and they leſs to envy me.

CHAP. XXXVII.

Plundered by a Servant, and aſſiſted where I leaſt expected it.

ONE night, when I had remained later than uſual at Miſs Gianetton's, I waited for my footman to come with a light, becauſe the night was dark and rainy; and not having ſeen him from twelve o'clock that day, I judged he was got in liquor, and did not think how late it was: after having waited till paſt midnight, I went home by myſelf, reſolving to diſcharge him the next morning: I had the key of my apartment, which had no connection with any other part of the houſe, and, as there was no light, I was obliged to ſtrike one: in undreſſing myſelf, I had occaſion to go into my cloſet where I put my cloaths, which I opened with a beating heart, as if I had foreſeen the villainy

villainy, when, to my surprize, I found it empty! I immediately ran to the bureau, where I put my linen, and all my jewels, and money; I found it broke open, and not the value of a halfpenny left! Oh God, how was I struck motionless at this sight! the tears came into my eyes, and I was ready to drop into a swoon at this sudden misfortune: my perfidious villain of a footman had plundered me of all; for having a key of my apartment, he went in and out as he pleased, with an excuse of putting it in order. Thus I lost every thing but what I had upon my back; I had, it is true, the gold watch the Prince gave me, but very little money in my pocket. My situation was most deplorable; and the only desperate council my confusion suggested to me, was, how to proceed on my journey to Lombardy, where the French army was; how to subsist in Turin, till I had back the money I left with Mrs. Cafardo; and who to run to, at that hour, to get some account of the villain, or from whom to get any thing towards my support. The sum I had lost was not trifling; for I brought with me, from Paris, as much as would have maintained me some years: what I had remaining

ing was but little; one half I must expend to equip myself for my journey, and to make a competent figure in the army; the other half would be exhausted in travelling expences: I should have nothing to help myself in time of need.

With these uneasy thoughts I passed the whole night, and not one soul to comfort me; I owed the landlady for two weeks board, nor had I another shirt to shift myself when the one I had on was dirty; and to appear in genteel company, it was necessary I should make a decent appearance. The news of my misfortune was, the next morning, spread all over the city; but no one offered me the loan of a single ducat. I was sitting in a coffee-house, receiving the fruitless compassion of others, when, at about twelve o'clock at noon, I was called aside by a person, of whom, during the past night, I had not, in my confusion, entertained even the least thought; this person was no other than Miss Gianetton, who came and conducted me to her own habitation, with the tears in her eyes, lamenting my sad misfortune: it is impossible to express the various methods she made use of to lessen my troubles, which almost deprived me of my senses. Her expressions

and

and actions, being correſpondent with each other, convinced me of the ſincerity of her intentions: I always believed, that in women of her profeſſion, vile intereſt was their ruling paſſion; but on this occaſion, I was very certain, that, in Miſs Gianetton, love prevailed: it affected her leſs in making me the offer of one hundred piſtoles of her own to ſupply my neceſſity, than it did me in accepting of them. The neceſſiy, however, to which I found myſelf reduced, obliged me, though contrary to my inclination, to embrace her offer; nor was this all, for Miſs Gianetton ſhewed herſelf ſtill more generous towards me; and doubting whether the ſupply I was in expectation of from Paris, was not a pretence, invented by me to conceal my ſhame, ſhe inſiſted upon immediately providing me with all neceſſaries: I oppoſed her reſolution, but in vain; and not to affront her, was forced to let her act as ſhe pleaſed. Having accepted what I wanted under the title of borrowing, and upon condition of reimburſement as ſoon as poſſible, I wrote to Madam Cafardo of my ſtate, related to her how much I was indebted to my benefactreſs, and begged ſhe would remit me the money

I left

I left in her hands, to ſatisfy the obligations I was under.

In a few days after Miſs Gianetton had obliged me in this particular manner, ſhe acquainted me, that ſhe had a great regard for my perſon, and, in ſhort, that ſhe was willing, if agreeable to myſelf, to become my wife: I was not a little ſurpriſed at her propoſal, and knew no better method to bring myſelf off with honour, than by telling her, that I already had a wife at Verſailles, from whom I was not ſeparated, though my duty at preſent called me to the army. I dreaded the conſequences which even this reaſonable excuſe might produce, ſuppoſing Miſs Gianetton to be really in love with me; but I found, to my great ſatisfaction, that her affection had not taken very deep root. Her view was, by marrying me, to enlarge the profits of her profeſſion as a ſinger, to which ſhe thought my knowledge of muſic would be no ſmall addition: ſhe was deſirous, as I before obſerved, of mimicking her betters in grandeur and magnificence; and let ſlip no opportunity in her power to ſupport that character.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

Letters received from Verſailles; and new Dangers of my being diſcovered at Turin.

SOME days after my misfortune at Turin, I was informed, by good authority, that Count Termes was with his regiment in Pavia, I had a great inclination to write to him, to give him another proof of my conſtancy: it was requiſite for me to write in ſuch a manner, that he might not find out where I was; accordingly I ſat down, and wrote to him as follows:

" Dear Sir,

This is the ſecond Letter that I write you, without acquainting you of the place of my abode, or what is the reaſon for my concealing it from you. Wherever I am, it is ſufficient to inform you, that I love you as much as ever; and rely upon the honour of your promiſes. With theſe hopes, I flatter myſelf, that in a few weeks we ſhall ſee each other, and will inform you in perſon of what I dare not in writing. I am all at your ſervice,

N. N.

Not only this, but the other letter alſo fell into the Count's hands, as I was afterwards informed, though both were rather cauſe of inquietude than content to him. My intricate method of writing kept him utterly in the dark; and if I had explained myſelf more clearly, even in this laſt letter, I ſhould have ſeen him a great deal ſooner, and my troubles would not have begun at a time when I expected they would have been finiſhed. Carrying the letter to the Poſt-office, I found one from Paris, wrote to me by Madam Cafardo, in anſwer to that I ſent from Mons. You may eaſily believe with what eagerneſs I opened it, to know how the Ducheſs proceeded after my ſudden departure; and my heart beat with the apprehenſion of hearing the Ducheſs's exclamation againſt me: but how agreeably was I diſappointed, when I found all contrary to what I expected. The firſt thing which preſented itſelf to my eyes, was a Bill of Exchange, of four hundred piſtoles, incloſed therein. The contents were as follow:

" Sir,

My concern for your departure is greatly diminiſhed by the news that you gave

gave me of your health and ſafety. The Ducheſs would have reaſon to be angry at your conduct, provided her regard for you was leſs; but her love has expelled every principle of reſentment from her heart, and her utmoſt wiſh is to know to what place you are flown. Her diſcords with the Duke are ſtill the ſame, and ſhe has not laid aſide the thoughts of ſeparating from him; but being deprived of your aſſiſtance, has taken other methods of proceeding. In the mean time, that you may not be ſtraightened in your expenſive journey, I ſend you a bill of four hundred piſtoles, without diminiſhing the capital left in my hands. And, with aſſurance of my tender affection for you, I am always the ſame.

CAFARDO."

Conſidering what had paſſed between me and Madam Cafardo, her generoſity ſurpriſed me much: ſhe gloried in aſſuring me, by theſe preſents, of the ſincerity of her repentance; and tho', at firſt, I hated her through revenge, yet to love her for this token of her affection, was now a duty incumbent on me. The account of the Ducheſs's bounty

bounty towards me, and the timely assistance of the money sent by my supposed spouse, without my asking for it, or she knowing the necessity I was in, were equally a comfort to me. I was anxious, in the first place, to repay the money to Miss Gianetton.

On the morning that I presented to Miss Gianetton, unexpectedly, the one hundred pistoles which she had lent me, and fifty more which she had laid out in cloaths for me, she was greatly astonished at it well knowing that the answer to my letter, wrote to Paris, could not be arrived yet: she knew not what to think, nor could conceive where I borrowed that sum, she said to affront her; and, to satisfy her, I was obliged to shew her the letter from my wife: this convinced her of the fact; but she had no sooner entered the play-house in the evening, than she indulged her vanity, by acquainting the other actors of my punctuality in repaying what she lent me, and of the large remittance which I received from France, representing it as double the value of what it was; and the opinion they entertained of me, in consequence of this change in my circumstances, might be easily perceived by their behaviour.

A few days after I received another letter from Madam Cafardo, in anſwer to that I wrote from Turin, and, in bills, the ſum of money I had wrote for. I was now again in a ſtate to make a decent appearance in the world, and to proceed on my journey for the army: I would not ſtay to look after what I was rob'd of; Miſs Gianetton perſiſted on my ſtaying in Turin till the ſeaſon for the operas was over, after which ſhe would go with me to Italy: this was ſufficient to haſten my departure; my heart was naturally grateful, and the obligations that tied me to Miſs Gianetton were inſeparable. One day, after dinner, I was walking towards the citadel, and obſerved in a coach, amongſt other perſons, a young lady, who gazed at me with attention, as if ſhe had known me before: I paſſed careleſly by, and her face did not ſeem new to me: the coach on a ſudden ſtopped, and a nobleman, who was in it, called to me, ſaying, Sir, this lady deſires the honour of ſpeaking to you: the honour, Sir, will be mine, replied I; and, going up to the coach, deſired to know her pleaſure. I am either abſolutely dreaming, ſaid ſhe, or you, Sir, ſo nearly reſemble Miſs D'Arville, known by me in

the convent of Avignon, that, if you are not her, you are certainly her brother. Imagine how I looked, at these words; I know not what concealed my blushes, but a cold horror ran through every vein, which mortified my shame within me, and I discovered, that moment, that the lady, who spoke to me, was Miss Marli, educated with me in the convent of Avignon. I found it very difficult to hide my confusion, nor did I know how to answer her: however, as I had no time to lose in reflections, No, Madam, I am not brother to Miss D'Arville, said I, nor do I even know her, only by what I have read in the Gazettes. You will excuse my curiosity, Sir, said she, as I had a great regard for her; and supposing you to be her brother, I was in hopes to hear something about her from you. If I knew any thing of her, Madam, replied I, with more frankness than at first, I might have gained great favour at Versailles, by acquainting them with it; for they are continually searching for her with the greatest diligence. It is surprising, said the lady, that they can hear nothing of her in so long a time. This Miss D'Arville, answered I, must have been a girl of spirit, having

ing the courage to form and execute such a scheme. Miss Marli detained me near half an hour at the door of the coach; and I found, by her discourse, that she was married at Turin about six months before, when she had just come out of retirement at Avignon: she broke off with assuring me, that if I would favour her with a visit, she should esteem it as a great pleasure. I took my leave, and promised to wait upon her; but, as soon as I was at liberty, resolved never to see her more. When I got back to my lodging, I reflected on what I should do: if I remain in Turin another moment, thought I, the curiosity of this woman may baffle all my schemes: Madam Marli waits for my visit, Miss Gianetton desires to go with me to Italy; I'll put both upon a par, and go off without seeing either; the one will call me ungrateful, the other rude: what does it signify? every ill is less than that which would happen if I was known. Having fixed this resolution, I left Turin that evening, and took the road for Lombardy.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXIX.

Before my Arrival at Milan the Count of Termes is recalled to Paris.

MOunted in a poſt-chaiſe, and accompanied only with my thoughts, I pleaſed myſelf with the hopes of ſeeing Count Termes, that I might acquaint him with my ſituation, and receive his advice. The nigher I drew to him, the more my love for him increaſed: never did I look ſo much at his picture as I did in that journey, though I always kept it about me; I pleaſed myſelf with the thoughts of ſurpriſing him when he leaſt expected it, and in hearing the firſt tranſports of his tenderneſs. In leſs than two days I arrived at Milan, but ſo tired with my journey that I was obliged to retire to my bed, and my ſickneſs, accompanied with a ſlight fever, gave me ſome uneaſineſs, being in an inn, and in a city where I knew nobody. I was then ſorry that I did not take Miſs Gianetton's council, whoſe company would have been very neceſſary to me. After two days repoſe my ſickneſs vaniſhed; and as I had been informed, the firſt day I came into town, that the Marſhall of

of **** was in Milan, where he intended to eſtabliſh his winter-quarters, I prepared myſelf to preſent to him the letters given me by the Prince, in which I was recommended. I provided a rich ſuit of cloaths in the military faſhion, adapted to the profeſſion I was going to embrace; and ſummonſed, to my aſſiſtance, all my reſolution, to merit there a gracious reception.

I had ſcarce entered the anti-chamber of the Marſhall, which was full of young officers, who, knowing I was of France, took particular notice of me: they aſked me, courteouſly, what was my buſineſs there? when telling them that I came from Verſailles, and had letters from the Prince of **** to the Marſhall, they introduced me to his preſence.

As ſoon as he ſaw me, You are, I ſuppoſe Sir, ſaid he, with a lively and free air, Count Richard, who was Gentleman to the Ducheſs of ****, my particular friend; I have been ſome weeks expecting you, and was afraid you had miſtaken the road; but I am now of a different opinion, and am rather induced to believe ſome love adventure has detained you by the way. I replied, that I ſuppoſed he had been informed

informed of what had happened to the Prince and me, at Paris; giving him, at the same time, an account of my misfortune at Turin. I then presented him with the letters, full of generous expressions concerning me; but he said they were needless, because he had others upon the same account, and that he had a commission at my service: you are then, said he, a Captain in the Burgundy regiment, which is quartered at Pavia, but you may remain with me, if you have a mind so to do, in Milan; in the mean time, you'll stay and dine with me to day, that I may measure your bravery by your appetite. He then gave me my commission, and I received the compliments of the gentlemen in the anti-chamber. I wished for an opportunity to be alone, to reflect properly on my new situation: I am now going to appear on the great stage of the world, in the character of a soldier; what could be more ridiculous and extravagant in a girl like me? if I had courage necessary for a soldier, I had neither the experience, art, or conduct, which alone, amongst so many dangers, could be a means of preserving my life: the idea of death did not terrify me, having desired it often, as

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an alleviation to my greateſt afflictions; yet love of life is natural to us all, and, in my preſent circumſtances, it appeared more deſirable than uſual to me. Miſerable me! ſaid I, in my heart, if, in a trench, or under a breach, I ſhould remain mortally wounded: the ſecret of my ſex would be diſcovered to the whole army; and what would become of my reputation and honour? how many would attribute this my metamorphoſis, to an unbridled luſt! how many would deny me the glory of thoſe virtuous principles, with which God was ſo good as to endow me, and which I ſhall ever ſtudy to maintain! This thought tormented me much; and when I reflected, that my love for Count Termes had reduced me to this extremity, I almoſt repented of loving him; knowing, that he was the cauſe of every misfortune which had happened to me hitherto, and which might happen to me hereafter. I had a great deſire to ſee him; and my being ordered by the Marſhall to remain in Milan, though my regiment was in Pavia, gave me incredible uneaſineſs: to evade which, my love ſoon found a remedy, and a paſſion, like mine, ſoon finds a thouſand reaſonable pretences; the ne-

ceſſity

ceſſity of making myſelf known to my regiment, was an excellent excuſe for me to get leave to go a few days to Pavia: I went ſoon after to the Marſhall, to get permiſſion for a few days to viſit my regiment in Pavia: I found him writing; and on ſeeing me, Come here, ſays he, I am juſt writing to the Ducheſs concerning yourſelf: I anſwered, that my perſon did not merit his taking ſo much trouble about me; at the ſame time I begged he would ſend her my humble reſpects. I ſhall do it, replied he, with pleaſure; ſhe has alſo deſired me to ſend Count Termes immediately to Verſailles, and, ſuppoſing you to have been here ſome time, has recommended your perſon: I have obeyed her, even before I anſwered her letter; and Count Termes will be at Verſailles to-morrow, for he left Pavia the ſame day you came to Milan; and, with the extraordinary poſt of this night, I ſhall acquaint her with what I have done for you, in conſequence of her recommendation. Theſe words pierced like ſo many thunderbolts to my poor heart; I knew not for what I came, nor did I know how to go away; I took my leave in the beſt manner I could, and, returning to my habitation,

tion, burſt out immediately into a flood of tears: Juſt heaven! ſaid I, what ſtate more painful, what deſtiny more obſtinate than mine, in purſuing me in this manner? I came purpoſely from Paris to Italy, to face death in the field of battle, in hopes of beholding Count Termes: and he, by the fatality of deſtiny, has been obliged to leave Pavia the very day I came to Milan: could any thing happen more unlucky than this, to make me miſerable and unhappy! If the confuſion of my mind had not blinded reaſonable reflection, how ſoon might I have penetrated into the motives of the whole proceeding: in a few moments after, the words of Madam Cafardo's letter ſtruck in my mind, in which ſhe mentioned, that the Ducheſs reſolutely deſigned to part with the Duke, and had others by whom ſhe might bring it about, without my aſſiſtance; and this muſt be her ſcheme, to obtain ſome account of the fugitive of Avignon: for this purpoſe ſhe has ſent for the Count; and, from what ſhe has heard concerning our correſpondence at Avignon, ſuppoſes him to be an accomplice in my flight: heavens! why did ſhe not think of this remedy before? why did ſhe not ſend for him

to Verſailles, while I was there, that the myſtery of my parentage might have been unravelled on the ſpot? to what end ſhould I tarry in Italy, deprived of the object which attracted me! and how can I leave it, without rendering myſelf contemptible to the Marſhall, and to the Prince, my protector, who recommended me? Oh God! how great was my agony; I was bound to accept a company in the army, to ſacrifice my liberty, to hazard my life, and endanger my honour; and all this for what? ---- Ah me! to that I was a ſtranger; and not to know the future conſequences of it, was to me a double torment: my bark, however, was launched out into the open ſea, and be the wind proſperous or foul, I muſt navigate the veſſel in the beſt manner I could, and wait the events of time. I ſoon experienced that the diſſolute and debauched way of life, common amongſt the young officers, would by no means ſuit with my inclination or conſtitution; and therefore I reſolved to ask permiſſion of the Marſhall to viſit my regiment in Pavia, in order to avoid the obligation I was under of keeping them company. This the Marſhall

Marſhall readily granted me, with leave to go and return to Milan whenever I thought proper; at the ſame time giving me a letter to the Brigadier who commanded there, that I might be treated with the utmoſt civility. I then proceeded on my journey to Pavia, and, as ſoon as I arrived, preſented the Brigadier with the letters from the Marſhall. I found a very obliging reception, and my quarters were appointed for me at the houſe of the Counteſs of * * *, to whom I was conducted, the ſame evening, by one of the adjutants. This Counteſs was a widow lady of about twenty-two years of age, not very rich, but full of ſpirit and tolerably handſome: ſhe had not, 'tis true, that vivacity and penetration which is ſo common and conſpicuous in the French ladies, but I found that the want of it was rather owing to her education than to any deficiency of her natural talents. When I entered her houſe ſhe received me in a genteel manner, and aſſigned me a very handſome apartment, telling me at the ſame time, ſhe was ſorry it was not in her power to accommodate me better: I replied that it was equal to my beſt wiſhes, and that her amiable company would make it

agreeable was it ever ſo bad. I began to be very happy in my new quarters, paſſing whole days in reading and writing; this the Counteſs attributed to melancholy, and rallied me often upon the little inclination I had for the company of the ladies; and I, in return, being deſirous to get rid of her importunities, told her, that I ſaw nothing in the Italian ladies, ſufficient to engage my attention; I ſhould not, I confeſs, have anſwered her thus, had I not found her really troubleſome to me.

CHAP. XL.

Motives of Jealouſy, which help to torment me.

ONE morning the Counteſs deſired my company to take a diſh of chocolate with her; I entered her room while ſhe was dreſſing at her toilet, and thinking that ſhe would never have done, I liked my own condition the better for not ſubjecting me to that torture; but after waiting ſome time, I could not help jokeing, as uſual, on her weakneſs; See, Madam, ſaid I, a French woman in this time would have been dreſt ſix times. You may talk as you pleaſe, replied ſhe, about the French

French ladies, but they are alſo women; and to dreſs themſelves properly, muſt have their proper time. The women of ſpirit, replied I, lament that time as loſt, though in others it ſerves to foment their vanity; the French ladies are alſo at their toilet every day, but then they ſpend a very little time at it, or elſe ſomething extraordinary occaſions them to ſtay longer; yet then they do not loſe their time, but read ſome good book, and while the waiting-maid is dreſſing their hair, they are adorning their minds by reading. I, anſwered the Counteſs, with diſdain, can do but one thing at a time. True, Madam, replied I, but that which your maid does, is not done by you; your whole buſineſs, at that time, is to pleaſe yourſelf, by looking at your own picture in the glaſs, when you might be much better employed in the peruſal of a good book, to the great improvement of your natural talents. So much reading I don't approve of, replied ſhe; and muſt ſay, that it is not agreeable to my ſex. This, ſaid I, is a very great fault in the education of you Italian women; your childhood they place under the direc-

tion of ſome ignorant bigot, who fills your mind with nothing elſe but ſtories of enchantments, witches, and ghoſts; and when he returns you to your mother, you ſcarce know even the alphabet: when you are at the age of nine or ten, with theſe prejudices in your mind, you are put into a cloiſter, to receive ſuch further improvements in your education as are judged neceſſary to qualify a fine lady; and when you leave the cloiſter, you come tumbling into the world without knowing what it is, and begin to converſe with men, without having one qualification neceſſary to maintain a converſation that would not be diſagreeable to others, and more ſo to yourſelf: all this is owing to an ill-judged education; in France, the women read more than the men; by which they gain the reputation of being women of underſtanding and ſpirit. Well, replied the Counteſs, you may cenſure as you pleaſe the Italian ladies, nevertheleſs we women muſt act as women, and not as poets and authors, and, without theſe ornaments, there are people that will excuſe us: this plainly ſhews that you are too nice with our ſex; I knew and have converſed with other French gentlemen,

who

who have done more juſtice to the Italian ladies. They might have done it, anſwered I, as lovers, to deluce you; and not to talk, as I do, like a friend. I don't know, ſaid the Counteſs, but I can ſhew you a letter, which I received from Paris yeſterday morning; read it, and you will know how he that wrote it ſpeaks of the Italian women: ſo ſaying, ſhe pulled it out of her pocket and toſſed it on the toilet, that I might read it. The curioſity of other people's affairs was never my weakneſs, though it always was of ſervice to me; I had no deſire to ſee the contents, but as ſhe toſſed it upon the toilet, half open, it ſeemed to be wrote in a character which I thought was not new to me; I took it with a ſmile, but, when I read it, Oh God! what a ſudden tumult roſe in my ſoul, on ſeeing it was wrote by Count Termes, and contained as follows:

" Madam,

I muſt ſay, that the Italian ladies, in point of conſtancy, are preferable to all other women; two letters of yours I have received ſince I came to Paris, and both confirm me in the high opinion I have for your perſon: every one, who is not inſenſible, cannot but adore

adore you though ever so far from you: I cannot assure you when I shall be for going to Italy, as my stay at this place depends entirely upon the Duchess of * * * *, who has called me here upon her own particular affairs: I can safely promise you, that, though afar off, I shall ever be, with the utmost respect to you, Madam,

TERMES."

What mystery did this letter unravel to me, and how many furious and disturbed ideas came at once into my mind! Count Termes was, in my eyes, an ungrateful and perfidious wretch; how much, thought I, have I suffered for him? I went strolling about the world, in disguise, in continual danger of my reputation, liberty, and life; without home, without refuge, without friends, and without parents; and he, in the mean time, has given his heart to another woman: 'tis plain he has been very intimate with her at Pavia, for he is in haste to leave Paris to return back to her: in her I see, before my eyes, my rival, which alone is sufficient to make me wish for her death; yet I am bound to live under one roof, and eat at one table with her, and to behave

with

with the civility due from a ſtranger to a miſtreſs of the houſe: if at firſt I thought that the Counteſs merited all my gratitude, I now thought ſhe merited my hatred and diſdain: female vanity had never any great power of my mind, becauſe I was accuſtomed to act the man, and almoſt forget that I was a woman; but, on this occaſion, it vigorouſly exerted itſelf, and I was fully convinced that the charms of the Counteſs were not to compare with mine, and that Count Termes did me great injuſtice. All theſe thoughts paſſed in my mind while I was reading the letter, and my greateſt difficulty was how to ſuppreſs my agitation, that I might learn ſomething more from the Counteſs. In returning her the letter, I aſked her, coolly, how ſhe became acquainted with Count Termes? That amiable Chevalier, ſaid ſhe, lodged in my houſe all laſt winter, and two months of this, which ſeemed to be only two days; every time I go into your room, or ſit down with you, he comes into my mind; I took a pleaſure in his company, becauſe he liked converſation, and had a better opinion of the Italian women than you ſeem to have: ſhe aſked me, if Count Termes was my acquaintance?

quaintance? and, upon my anſwering in the affirmative, ſhe was open enough to tell me, that if he had not been called to Paris, he would certainly have married her that winter. Every word ſhe ſpoke concerning him, was a wound to my poor heart, which had ſuffered all afflictions except that of jealouſy, and which I found to be the greateſt and ſharpeſt of them all; had the Counteſs known what trouble her words gave me, ſhe would never have ſpoken of him more; but ſhe made me her confidant in all her tenderneſs, and took occaſion, on every trifling accident, to reaſon with me about him, as if ſhe did it on purpoſe to anger me: the city, and even the houſe, in which I expected to be at eaſe, was now an object of trouble to me; the very bed I lay upon at night, when I reflected that it was the ſame on which that ingrateful wretch had ſlept, became odious to me; and every word of the Counteſs, even the moſt indifferent, revived my jealous ſuſpicions.

CHAP. XLI.

My feigned Amour with the Countefs, and Conſequences attending it.

FROM morning till night internally troubled with theſe thoughts, I could no longer enjoy any quiet in a city, or houſe, that at firſt I took delight in; the name only of Count Termes, would formerly have made my heart leap with joy, but now his name, and the houſe he lodged in, was to me a continual torment: to leave at once both that place and my rival, I thought would make me leſs unhappy; but with what pretence could I leave thoſe quarters, without leaving Pavia? and how could I leave Pavia, when I had obtained permiſſion from the Marſhall to ſtay there ſome time? After many reflections, I reſolved to be ruled in all by reaſon, and, in preference to every other conſideration, to follow the ſteps of virtue: it is enough, ſaid I, to myſelf, that the Count is guilty; a man is never wanting in excuſes, and to a lover there is nothing more eaſy than to regain the heart with a little flattery; I muſt convince him of his crime in a manner that he cannot deny it, and, when

when I have convinced him, I will leave loving of him, and his crime alone will ſerve to puniſh him. To compaſs this deſign, I muſt remain in the ſame houſe with the Counteſs, and dexterouſly get out of her hands one of the Count's letters, that I might ſend it to him incloſed in one of mine, and with it make him bluſh. The undertaking was very difficult, becauſe as much as the Counteſs was fooliſh and imprudent, ſhe would not have failed in this firſt of her amours, unleſs one could make her fall by ſome cheat; the weakeſt part in a woman of her character, thought I, is vanity; therefore I reſolved to attack her on this ſide, and by that means obtain my deſire; thus I was to repreſent a lover, a ſcene ſo contrary to that which paſſed in my heart; ſhe with every word, I may ſay, gave me my death; and I, with every word, ſtudied to excite in her breaſt a new tenderneſs; at the firſt aſſault the Counteſs was a little ſurpriſed, but declared ſome affection for me, and the next time confirmed it with words, proteſtations, and oaths of fidelity, ſo that I might repute myſelf the happieſt lover upon earth; the Count was no more ſpoke of but as ingrateful and

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unconſtant, though ſhe before expreſſed to me the praiſes ſhe received from him; they were now repreſented in a different light; what ſhe ſaid now perhaps may be true, and not what ſhe ſaid before; but in either caſe ſhe might be equally a liar.

My love with the Counteſs made great progreſs; I do not preſume to ſay ſhe really loved me, becauſe real love cannot be where there is ſo much inconſtancy; but there was every ſign of a ſincere tenderneſs, and one time in particular it was very near proving fatal to my ſcheme. Whoever of us was up the ſooneſt went into the other's apartment to drink chocolate, and I uſed to wait upon her; but one morning to my misfortune, I was prevented by her coming into my room before I was hardly awake, with all that familiarity which, to a widow, hoſpitality, friendſhip, and love permits; ſhe ſat down on the ſide of the bed, and preſented to me the chocolate; I would have ſooner been at the head of a picquet in the field, expoſed to an hundred archers, than in that bed at the face of one woman only, who might very eaſily have found what ſort of an officer I was: I was uſed to ſleep al-

ways with a linen bed-gown tight round my body; had I only put one of my arms from under the cloaths, it would have been ſufficient to let the Counteſs ſee what I was; nor was there any method to rid myſelf of my fears, but by ſmiling, and ſaying, Dear Counteſs, ſince you have ſaved me the trouble of going to your room, ſave me that of putting my hands into the cold, and give me the chocolate yourſelf. The Counteſs, without the leaſt ſuſpicion, laughed and took pleaſure in holding it to my mouth, and I, glad not to trouble her long, drank it off in two ſips; when ſhe had drank her own, ſhe went away laughing, and left me at liberty to dreſs myſelf; and I ſwore in my heart never to let her catch me in bed any more.

But my principal view was to get ſome letter of the Count's out of her hands, and by appearing jealous I almoſt reduced her to the point of giving them to me to burn. One morning, while ſhe was looking in her trunk for them, a footman brought me word that there was ſomebody deſired to ſee me; let them come in, replied the Counteſs, let who will want him they are welcome; but how was I ſurpriſed

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at ſeeing a girl in a travelling dreſs, who, not obſerving the Counteſs, flew to me, and, throwing her arms round my neck, had almoſt kiſſed me. No one will wonder at this liberty when they know that this traveller was Miſs Gianetton, who, going to ſing at Milan, came expreſly to Pavia to have the pleaſure of ſeeing me; her viſit would have been welcome, if in that encounter ſhe had behaved a little more diſcreet. At ſight of her I remained ſtunn'd, nor was the Counteſs leſs ſurpriſed than me; but jealouſy poſſeſſed her that moment, and ſpitefully ſhutting the trunk, in which ſhe was looking for the Count's letters, ſhe gave me a frown which ſpoke a hundred things at once, and went out of the room without ſaluting the ſtranger; Miſs Gianetton could not be but ſurpriſed at this accident, and asked me the reaſon? I made ſome excuſe, and could ſoon have got rid of her company, but conſidering the obligations I lay under to her, I could not do it without ſhewing myſelf ungrateful: I was obliged to hear from her all the lamentable accidents of her journey, and how ill ſhe was uſed by the governors of the theatre, and, in ſhort, all that had happened ſince

I had left Turin: at length ſhe went away. I could hardly exempt myſelf from accompanying her to her lodging, making a hundred excuſes, and promiſing that before dark I would pay her a viſit. As ſoon as ſhe was gone I thought of reconciling myſelf with the Counteſs, but ſhe would not hear me; Go to your Singer, were the only words I could get from her, tho' I told her who Miſs Gianetton was, and the obligations I owed to her; in ſhort, Madam, ſaid I, let me tell you, that you Italian women are very unreaſonable in your paſſions; I do not mind your amours with Count Termes, becauſe you knew him before you did me; and you make a crime of my love with Miſs Gianetton, though I knew her before I did you; if Count Termes came into your room ſuddenly, and did not ſee me preſent, he would have acted in the ſame manner with you; neither would you in that caſe have made any reſiſtance. Even with theſe invincible reaſons, nothing elſe would ſhe anſwer but, Go to your Singer; on this I grew a little hot, ſo ſcornfully ſaying, Then I will go, I immediately left her.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLII.

An Opportunity offers for me to convince Count Termes of his Infidelity, and to return to Milan.

LEaving the Counteſs I went directly to find Miſs Gianetton, who in two hours time had contracted an intimate acquaintance with all the officers in the garriſon; ſhe did not tarry long at Pavia, but ſet out for Milan, accompanied with more officers than Armida, General of the French army, when attended by Godfrey's Captains, in the expedition of the Holy Land: I began to ſtudy how I ſhould act with the Counteſs, that I might gain my intended point, and not throw away my time to no purpoſe. I went home in a very ill humour, and, as good luck would have it, the Counteſs was juſt gone out; I packed up a few neceſſaries in a portmanteau, got into a poſt-chaiſe, and left word by one of the ſervants that I was gone to Piacenza, where I ſhould ſtay three weeks before I returned: when ſhe came home, and heard the news, her grief was incredible; if ſhe had no reaſon to treat me as ſhe did, ſhe had a great deal leſs to

lament being treated by me in that manner herſelf. A little ſenſe, with her ſpirit, or, if it is permitted me to ſay, a little philoſophy would have prevented her driving on this rock; I had been but three days at Piacenza when I received a large packet, and incloſed Count Termes' letters, accompanied with one from the Counteſs, which I always have preſerved, and which was as follow:

" Dear Sir,

I ſacrifice to you even the letters of Count Termes, that I might be able to ſay, I have done all in my power for you: I do not ask nor expect the leaſt return from you, becauſe, if you have the heart to abandon me for ſo many days, you are abſolutely ungrateful: if you think proper to direct where I ſhould ſend the remainder of your things you ſhall be obeyed. I do not expect to ſee you more, becauſe you will not come; and if you do, you will not ſee me alive. I am, devotedly,

Your Servant."

Thus did I obtain my end in the moſt unexpected manner, and got poſſeſſion of the letters wrote to my rival; yet,

yet, on reading them, I could not find one word inconſiſtent with the ſtricteſt honour; but his writing them to her I thought a crime unpardonable. I determined immediately to write to Paris, and, by incloſing in the ſame pacquet thoſe which occaſioned my reſentment, to convict him by his own hand writing; though at the ſame time I had ſome ſcruples in my mind, whether my treating, in this manner, a lady who confided in me, would be agreeable to the ſtrict rules of honour and juſtice: finally, I concluded that the Counteſs had done wrong to ſacrifice thoſe letters to the jealouſy of a third perſon, and I ſhould act rightly in preſerving Count Termes from the danger of ſeeing his honour entruſted to the weakneſs of other people; I therefore proceeded to write my letter, which was of this tenor:

"Dear Sir,

This is the laſt time you will ſee any letter of mine, or hear further of my perſon; in the annexed you will ſee who is to be blamed: having done ſo much to prove my love to you, I can alſo endeavour to forget you. Adieu.

D'Arville."

The pacquet being ſealed and directed, I ſent it away, but knew not how to demean myſelf with the Counteſs; having obtained my wiſh, I might indeed return to Pavia; but how could I diſſemble the part of a lover to one who was my rival, and, at the ſame time, the ſole occaſion of my breach with Count Termes? with the letters of the Count, I alſo ſent the one the Counteſs wrote to me, that he might have ocular demonſtration that he had ſacrificed a faithful lover to an inconſtant woman; and all theſe letters might have produced dangerous effects to me, if Count Termes had been ſo imprudent as to upbraid the Counteſs. Notwithſtanding this, I was obliged to return to Pavia, in hopes that, before anſwers came from Paris, ſome accident would happen that would deliver me from the importunities of the Counteſs, and, if it came to the worſt, I could contrive ſome way to be called back to Milan. After an abſence of ſix days I arrived there, and the Counteſs received me as if no miſunderſtanding had happened between us; and if I could have eraſed from my mind her former connections with Count Termes, I might have paſſed my time with her in a comfortable

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and agreeable manner: but as the thoughts of his inconſtancy were ever uppermoſt in my mind, I reſolved to leave Pavia the firſt opportunity, and accordingly wrote to the Marſhall, informing him that I was deſirous of being recalled, and tired of remaining there utterly inactive, and uſeleſs to my King and country: this letter to the Marſhall did me great honour, and he immediately ſent orders for me to repair to Milan. After continuing there ſome days, we had notice to march to Piacenza. We paſſed that winter and the next ſpring in continual marches, that we might keep continual obſervation of the enemy. In the ſummer we incamped near Sacca, and extended into Parma, where there was a guard of ſix battallions. Nothing happened there worth mentioning; I received indeed ſome letters from Miſs Gianetton and the Counteſs, which I anſwered according to my cuſtom by another hand; but they ſoon left off importuning me, I ſuppoſe they found better ways to imploy their time. Of Count Termes I had no news, nor could I have it, becauſe he did not know where I was, nor under what name to direct his letters to me; he now and then came into

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my mind, but the memory of him did not trouble me much, becauſe my thoughts were employed on the dangers of my life, which was expoſed every moment in the heart of an army who fought every occaſion to come to battle with the enemy, and not a day paſſed without ſome ſkirmiſhes: it was not the love of my life that kept me in continual apprehenſion, ſo much as the fear of being diſcovered to be a woman, if I ſhould, by ſome unlucky blow, be ſtruck dead, and leave my honour expoſed to the ſlander of the malicious; but the Marſhall favoured me in all encounters, and I attributed it to the recommendation of the Prince, who often deſired news of my perſon; his precautions nevertheleſs were not infallible, and my unlucky deſtiny followed me wherever I went.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLIII.

A Battle at Parma, where I was wounded in my Leg.

IN the heat of the ſummer we had notice one night, in the camp, that the army of the Auſtrians decamped ſuddenly, and was marching towards Parma, in order to poſſeſs the road that leads to Piacenza: we immediately decamped and marched all that night, and two hours after ſun-riſe we were under the walls of Parma, entering on the road that led to the enemy; my battallion was, in the march, the ſecond of the van-guard; we were hardly got forward half a mile before we found ourſelves in the enemy's fire; the Auſtrians were in battle array in the field upon our left, which was covered with trees, and, being in the middle of ſummer, were full of leaves and boughs, which had hindered us from ſeeing them; a ſhower of ſhot was diſcharged at us from the buſhes. The whole of our amy upon that road conſiſted of only ſix battalioos, and our ſituation being upon an eminence, our legs were much expoſed to the enemy's fire; I was ſtanding at a little diſtance,

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with my left leg acroſs a pike, reſting myſelf thereon, when on a ſudden I received a wound in the calf of my leg by a muſſket-ſhot; the wound was ſlight, but on ſeeing the blood I was more frightened than hurt; however I ſeemed but little daunted at the accident, and, after the ſurgeon had dreſſed my leg, by the aſſiſtance of two ſoldiers, I mounted horſe and went to a farm-houſe, which ſtood at about a mile diſtance from the field of battle; when I felt that the pain of my wound was but trifling, and the ſurgeon had aſſured me that in two days it would be perfectly well, I thought I had bought my life at a cheap rate, for the battle was not decided till night; and though the Auſtrian General lay dead in the field, and both armies had withdrawn, it could not be ſaid on which ſide the victory lay; but the proceedings of the Auſtrians, that night, determined it in favour of the French troops, and, before day-light, the whole Auſtrian army decamped and left us maſters of the field. The next morning the Marſhall intending to ſend me expreſs to Paris with the news of the victory, and thereby to pleaſe the Prince, my protector, enquired for me, and being informed

formed that I was wounded, diſpatched another in my ſtead, and ſent to my quarters his own ſurgeon with orders to inſpect my wound; he found me out of bed, and ſo ſlight was my wound that I found no inconvenience from it, any farther than my being obliged to ſit down that I might not irritate it; and I could not forbear laughing to think that I had repreſented a French officer, and could now give an account of a whole campaign, a bloody battle, and the wound I myſelf had received in it.

Our army did not tarry long encamped in the field of battle, but I continued in the houſe of the old man on account of my wound; I was not very well pleaſed with my lodging, however it was better than to be in a tent, expoſed to the inclemency of the night air: to make it more agreeable I ordered my own bed to be brought, for the poor farmer could accommodate me with nothing but ſtraw. The night was about two hours advanced, when there came running into my room, terribly frighted, a young girl, as I believed by her habit, about the age of fourteen or fifteen, in a country dreſs, with a genteel ſhape and noble air,

that ſhewed her to be of ſome grand family. For charity, Sir, ſaid ſhe, (crying, and throwing herſelf at my feet) for charity help me! Moved internally with compaſſion and ſurprize, I raiſed her from the ground, and aſked the cauſe of her diſtreſs, and what I ſhould do to help her? Shelter me, Sir, ſaid ſhe, at leaſt for the night; ſome ſoldiers have plundered our houſe, and are in purſuit of me: I know not where to run, neither have I money to procure myſelf a lodging till day-light, when I can go into the city. If this is all you want, ſaid I, remain with me, and fear nothing; the point is, that in this houſe there is no other bed than mine; I would not wrong your honeſty ſo much as to aſk you to lie with me, but we will manage for the beſt. I ſpoke this as a joke, not that I ſhould make any difficulty in ſleeping with one of my own ſex, but I would not have done it at that time, upon any conſideration, as I muſt have not only risked a diſcovery of my ſex, but alſo in appearance have affronted her. I was not a little ſurpriſed when ſhe accepted, without more invitation, my offer, and for one of her age I thought it extreamly immodeſt. Yes, Sir,

Sir, ſaid ſhe, you will do me a particular kindneſs, and may readily do it when in confidence, as you are a gentleman, I can aſſure you, than I am not a girl as I ſeem to you, but a nobleman's ſon. How! ſaid I, you the ſon of a nobleman? why then in this dreſs, and at this hour, have you fled into the country for protection? he then related to me his hiſtory, by which I found he was the ſon of a noble Marquis, and had been driven to this diſtreſs by the ſeverity of his tutor; but as he will be mentioned with more propriety in the ſecond volume of theſe Memoirs, I ſhall at preſent only inform my readers, that when I found myſelf able to rejoin the army, I took him with me and preſented him to the Marſhall, who gave him a cornet's commiſſion in a ſquadron of the guards.

CHAP. XLIV.

My Journey into various Cities of Italy, accompanied with some Misfortunes.

I Was not present in any more actions that campaign, having caught a violent cold, occasioned by hardships to which my constitution was not accustomed; I remained indispos'd in Bologna almost all that summer, but, being pretty well recovered, towards autumn I obtained leave of the Marshall, during that winter, to visit the other parts of Italy.

Departing from Bologna towards the latter end of autumn, I went to Padua, from thence to Vienna, Verona, and Brescia, which I found really worth my observation: in one of these, which to mention does not signify, I remained three days, during which time there was a great entertainment made, to which all the grandees of the country were invited; I also prepared myself to go, and dressing myself as grand as possible, resolved to see the magnificence of it. There was a gentleman at the door receiving the gentry as they came in, but as soon as I attempted to enter, he impudently pushed me aside, and

and aſked me loudly, what I wanted there? That which other people want, replied I. No, Sir, ſaid he, this is not a place for you. I told him, that I was a gentleman, and an officer of France, and could claim admittance to the beſt company. Theſe are things that you ſay, replied he, becauſe people here know but little of you; the gentlemen and officers of France are not arreſted and committed to the Baſtile for ſpies, cheats, and rogues. Theſe words, mixed with truth and falſity, exaſperated me to ſuch a degree, that I almoſt loſt my reaſon; he is a ſcoundrel, ſaid I, that ſays this of me, and merits my reſentment: ſo ſaying, I ſtarted back a couple of ſteps, and clapping my hand to my ſword, ſhould have ran him through that moment, had not ſome gentlemen interfered, to whom I gave my reaſons, and ſhewed my paſs-ports from the Marſhall. I was then admitted to the entertainment, where I received a thouſand compliments on my behaviour, but this was not enough to ſatisfy me; I remained ſome time in that place with the ſting in my heart, nor could I underſtand how a well-deſcended perſon could have the face to inſult a ſtranger, without being ſure

that what he had asserted was truth: my imprisonment in the Bastile was undeniable, and it was mentioned in all the Gazettes in Europe; but the reasons of it were known to every one, and that any thing against my character, relative to that affair, must be a malicious forgery and imposture. Not to leave such an infamous name behind me, in such an illustrious city, and to get some satisfaction for the affront, I had recourse to proper persons, and in consequence had justice done me; that impertinent gentleman was obliged to come in public to the same place where he had affronted me, and ask my pardon; he confessed he had been wrongly informed of my person: but this information served only to increase my torment, not being able to imagine who this person was; and to discover it from him that offended me, it was impossible. About three days after I happened to stop on the parade, to hear the noise of a mountebank from a stage that was built there, and where upwards of five hundred people were gaping at him, and hearkening to his nonsensical speeches; looking earnestly at him, I found it to be that villain Tartar, the comedian; I knew not for what reason

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he came to Italy, but I ſuppoſed him to be the perſon who gave that falſe information of me to the man who had affronted me, nor did that day paſs without my being fully ſatisfied by the landlord where he lodged, who was a ſober, honeſt man, and one well acquainted with the country. I found from him, that between Tartar and the other there was a ſtrict connection. To have this villain puniſhed I thought would be an act of charity towards others, and juſtice to myſelf: I had, for a ſervant, one of my ſoldiers, a man of courage, and capable to reſent any thing for love of me; and having communicated to him my juſt intentions, he watched for Mr. Tartar one night, when he was coming from the houſe of his protector, and gave him ſuch a ſevere drubbing, that Tartar could not get out of his bed for two months after.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLV.

My Stay in Venice, and what happened to me in that City.

THIS affair made a great noiſe, and every one might ſee what wind brought that tempeſt upon Tartar; they could not but ſay I was in the right, or at leaſt excuſe me; but ſay what they pleaſed, I left that place a few days after, and went to Venice. Of this place I had read and heard great wonders, and, in truth, it fully anſwered my expectations. The carnival time being juſt begun, I might take what pleaſure I thought proper, for no other city was ſo agreeable to me as this, by reaſon I was always afraid of being diſcovered to be Miſs D'Arville, and the commodiouſneſs of the maſquerade here I thought would help to keep me ſecure. Having always made it my rule to fall in with the taſte of the place, I procured a maſquerade dreſs, and frequented the public aſſemblies; but my unlucky deſtiny purſued me even here, for having ſtayed in the public room one evening ſomewhat later than uſual, on my coming out I was ſurrounded by a party of conſtables, who,

who, without giving me any reaſon for ſuch treatment, conveyed me to a damp, dark, and ſtinking dungeon underground, where they ſhut me in, and, on leaving me, ſaid, Now, Madam, juſtice has overtaken you, and you will have an opportunity in this place to reflect upon, and repent of your paſt behaviour. By the word, Madam, it was evident I was taken for a woman; and I made not the leaſt doubt, but that the Duke had by ſome means got intelligence of me, and in conſequence had cauſed me to be arreſted. I paſſed that night on the bare boards, and, Oh, God! what was then my agony, and my moſt ſerious reflections! in the Baſtile, I was in the hands of people that knew ſomething of my honeſt character, and therefore I might expect from friends ſome relief; here I knew nobody, nor could I tell what ſuſpicion they had conceived againſt me, when they uſed me thus without knowing me; the leaſt I had to fear was a long impriſonment, and the fear of being diſcovered to be a woman troubled me more than the thoughts of death itſelf: at laſt daylight appeared, and the door of my dungeon being opened, there entered a man whom at the firſt ſight I took to be my

execu-

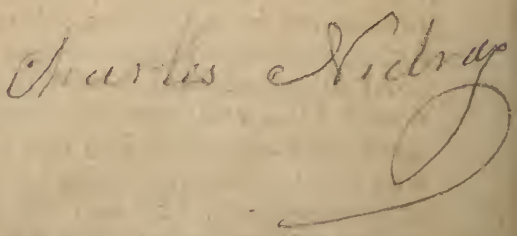
executioner; he advanced, saying to me, You are here then, unworthy; you are at last dropt into my hands; nor did it signify changing your cloaths to escape unpunished. I cannot describe the effect these words had on me, because I was out of my senses; I knew I was before a man of an advanced age and venerable aspect, who, looking at me stedfastly from head to foot, seemed astonished, and said, Dear Sir, excuse me, you are not Rosaura; my orders are badly executed, or else the constables were deceived in your appearance; let this gentleman be immediately released, for I have nothing to alledge against him. His orders were executed immediately, and I put on my masquerade dress to go out of that place without being known. When he saw me in the masquerade dress, Really, said he, to see you now, you resemble Rosaura so much that I absolutely should take you to be her; she was by me brought up from her childhood, and entertained with so much care in my house when my wife was living, that she loved her as a child of her own; it is now fifteen days since she ran away from the house, and, when I thought her in a foreign country, I observed her with a man's mas-

masquerade dress, going about Venice; and she had not only a dress like yours, but also the very air, mein, and shape; so, dear Sir, excuse me if you have received this ill treatment on my account; I am a gentleman, and to me you seem a stranger, nor would I have you carry a thought of me to your country that might be a dishonour to me; do me the favour to come to my house, which shall be yours as long as you stay in Venice, that I may have the pleasure of making you all the satisfaction in my power: he insisted upon my complying with his request, nor had I occasion afterwards to repent it, having found in this most worthy gentleman a real honest man: he conduct-me with him to his house, then sent to my lodging for my things, with orders for my landlord to expect me no more.

At this gentleman's house I met with a most kind and agreeable reception, and after staying with him fifteen days, with great difficulty obtained his permission to depart. I left him with a promise to see him again as soon as possible, and proceeded on my journey to Bologna, and from thence took the road to Rome: I found the French army encamped on the Roman confines; I received

ceived my pay due for ſervice of the preceding winter, and got leave of the Marſhall to proceed on my journey, upon condition that I ſhould be back to the army towards the latter end of Lent. Accordingly I ſet out, little expecting that I ſhould there attain the knowledge of my real parents.

The End of the FIRST VOLUME.



Charles Dickens